Three Farces by David Garrick

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THREE FARCES
BY DAVID GARRICK

GARRICK IN THE GREEN ROOM.

HOGARTH, himself in the foreground, represents GARRICK speaking to some members of his company. MRS. GARRICK, MRS. YATES, and MRS. ABINGTON appear in the picture.

The Lying Valet.

A Peep Behind the Curtain;
or, The New Rehearsal.

Bon Ton;
or, High Life Above Stairs.

Three Farces by David Garrick.

Edited with Introductions by
Louise Brown Osborn.

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Engraved, from Hogarth's painting, by William Ward and published in 1829 *by J. W. Southgate. The reproduction used in this volume is from the engraving in the collection of Garrick prints in the Harvard College Library.*

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INTRODUCTION

DAVID GARRICK, born in 1717, came up to London from Lichfield with Samuel Johnson in the year 1737. Four years later he broke away from the trade of wine merchant, in which he had engaged with his brother Peter, and, on October 19, 1741, startled the spectators in the theater in Goodman's Fields with his acting of Richard III. Not only were the natives of Lichfield, then resident in London, loyal in their support and enthusiastic in their praise of this fellow-townsman, but the élite of Grosvenor-Square hurried their footmen four miles to reserve places for them at the obscure theater in Goodman's Fields, in order to see the young Roscius of the age. Since the theater in Goodman's Fields was not regularly licensed, the playbills, to evade the law, announced the performance of *Richard III* as a part of a "Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music" to be given "At the late Theatre in Goodman's Fields. . . . Tickets at three, two and one shilling." For the same reason, *The Lying Valet*, the next month, was announced as performed "gratis." Such crowds flocked to Goodman's Fields that the managers of the two regularly patented theaters effected the closing of that house, but so great had been the triumphs of Garrick that he was engaged for the season of 1742-1743 at Drury-Lane at a salary of six hundred guineas, the largest yet paid to an actor. His successes at Drury-Lane, his assumption of the duties of manager there in 1747, his subsequent retirement in 1776 before his

abilities had declined, and his death on January 20, 1779, are the chief events of Garrick's career.

But Garrick was more than the preëminent actor of his age and the most successful of theatrical managers. He undoubtedly merits consideration as a writer of farce. Besides his Shakespearean and other adaptations in the field of regular drama, he wrote seventeen farces and dramatic entertainments of greater or less originality and of marked popularity. The cynical Horace Walpole furnishes a kind of negative evidence for the popularity of these productions, when he deplores contemporary taste in this vein: "When Garrick's . . . farces, and the comedies of the fools that pay court to him are the delight of the age, it does not deserve anything better." And again: "Garrick is treating the town as it deserves and likes to be treated, with scenes, fireworks, and his own writing." Yet Walpole had to admit that his "pieces . . . delight the mob in the boxes as well as in the footman's gallery."

Garrick was thoroughly acquainted with French drama; and, indeed, the influence of French farce is openly avowed by him in several instances. Florent Carton D'Ancourt, Molière, Le Sage, Fagan, and P. A. Motteux all furnished material for farcical adaptations. But in each case, Garrick introduced material of his own and welded it with his borrowed intrigue into a vivacious farce that may properly be called his own. His plays are full of clever situations, admirably suited for acting, and consequently of intrinsic worth; they are, moreover, illuminating examples of a peculiar and almost forgotten dramatic type—that of the afterpiece. During the period of Garrick's activities, it was cus-

tomary to open the theaters at five in the afternoon; the curtain went up promptly at six; and the play itself was over by nine. To eke out the evening's entertainment, an afterpiece, consisting of a farce of two or three acts, was always presented. Thus the greatest Shakespearean tragedies, as well as such contemporary comedies as *The Clandestine Marriage*, by Colman and Garrick, were followed by a slight, humorous farce of intrigue. It was the demand for this type that, in almost every case, actuated Garrick in his dramatic composition. Many of these pieces were very hastily written, often for a benefit performance of one of his actors. Most of them, however, enjoyed a great popularity during the period of Garrick's managership.

Three of the best and most popular of these farces are here reprinted. Besides preserving something of the atmosphere of the eighteenth century playhouses and illuminating the tastes and fashions of the time, they furnish a copious supply of genuine if obvious humor and reveal the ingenuity of the great theatrical genius of the century. There have been no recent editions of Garrick's works. None of the farces here given has been reprinted since the appearance of *The Lying Valet* in *The British Drama*, Philadelphia, 1850. The present plays have been chosen because of their possibilities for modern representation and for their variety of plot. As it happens, they were written at widely separated periods of Garrick's career, and they are here arranged in chronological order.

L. B. O.

THE LYING VALET.

THE LYING VALET was first acted at Goodman's Fields on November 30, 1741, as the afterpiece to Otway's *The Orphan*. Garrick himself took the title rôle, and made it a popular one. *The Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1742, remarks: "In the parts of Richard III, and King Lear, The Lying Valet, and Bayes in the *Rehearsal*, he [Garrick] is as different as they are opposite, and enters into their spirit with great Justness and Propriety." Both Shuter and Quick later played the part. The farce was acted at Covent Garden on October 11, 1743, May 2, 1758, and November 30, 1784. Its representations at Drury-Lane were far more frequent than at the other playhouses. Letters of the period show it was favorably received.

The piece was written as early as October 20, 1741; for on that date, the day after his triumph as Richard III, Garrick wrote to his brother Peter: "I have a farce (ye Lying Valet) coming out at Drury Lane." Genest has pointed out that this farce is, in great measure, taken from P. A. Motteux's *All without Money*, which formed the second act of a play called *Novelty: Every Act a Play*, published at London in 1697.

The first edition of *The Lying Valet* was advertised by the printer, Roberts, in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for December, 1741. The title page of the first edition, however, bears the date 1742. A second edition appeared in 1743; and others, to the number of eight, came out between that date and 1761. In 1778 from R. Bell's press in Philadelphia, an edition was published with this title page: "The Lying Valet A Comedy in two Acts. Written by D. Garrick,

esq. Printed at the desire of some of the officers of the American army, who intend to exhibit it at the Play-house for the benefit of families who have suffered in the war for American liberty." The success of ventures of this sort must, however, have been diminished by the following resolution of Congress, dated October 16, 1778: "Whereas frequenting Play houses and theatrical entertainments, has a fatal tendency to divert the minds of the people from a due attention to the means necessary for the defence of their country and preservation of their liberties: Resolved, That any person holding an office under the United States, who shall act, promote, encourage, or attend such plays, shall be deemed unworthy to hold such office, and shall be accordingly dismissed."

Besides the editions already referred to, a German translation was published at Frankfort and Leipzig in 1791 with this title: *Die Nothlüge: Ein Lustspiel in swey Aufzugen aus dem Englischen des Herrn Garrick.*

The text reprinted here is from the eighth edition, which represents more careful workmanship than does the first.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN

Sharp (the Lying Valet)	Mr. *Garrick.*
Gayless	Mr. *Blakes.*
Justice Guttle	Mr. *Taswell.*
Beau Trippet	Mr. *Neal.*
Dick	Mr. *Yates.*

WOMEN

Melissa	Miss *Bennet.*
Kitty Pry	Mrs. *Clive.*
Mrs. Gadabout	Mrs. *Cross.*
Mrs. Trippet	Mrs. *Rideout.*
Prissy, Mrs. Gadabout's daughter	
A Niece of Mrs. Gadabout's	

THE

LYING VALET.

ACT I. SCENE I.

GAYLESS' *Lodgings.*

Enter GAYLESS *and* SHARP.

Sharp. How, Sir! shall you be married to-morrow? eh, I'm afraid you joke with your poor humble servant.

Gay. I tell thee, Sharp, last night Melissa consented, and fixed to-morrow for the happy day.

Sharp. 'Twas well she did, Sir, or it might have been a dreadful one for us in our present condition: all your money spent; your movables sold; your honour almost ruined, and your humble servant almost starved; we could not possibly have stood it two days longer.—But if this young lady will marry you and relieve us, o' my conscience, I'll turn friend to the sex, rail no more at matrimony, but curse the whores, and think of a wife myself.

Gay. And yet, Sharp, when I think how I have imposed upon her, I am almost resolved to throw myself at her feet, tell her the real situation of my affairs, ask her pardon, and implore her pity.

Sharp. After marriage, with all my heart, Sir; but don't let your conscience and honour so far get the

better of your poverty and good sense, as to rely on so great uncertainties as a fine lady's mercy and good-nature.

Gay. I know her generous temper, and am almost persuaded to rely upon it: what, because I am poor, shall I abandon my honour?

Sharp. Yes, you must, Sir, or abandon me: so pray, discharge one of us; for eat I must, and speedily too: and you know very well that that honour of yours will neither introduce you to a great man's table, nor get me credit for a single beef-steak.

Gay. What can I do?

Sharp. Nothing while honour sticks in your throat: do gulp, master, and down with it.

Gay. Prithee leave me to my thoughts.

Sharp. Leave you! no, not in such bad company, I'll assure you! why, you must certainly be a great philosopher, Sir, to moralize and declaim so charmingly as you do, about honour and conscience, when your doors are beset with bailiffs, and not one single guinea in your pocket to bribe the villains.

Gay. Don't be witty, and give your advice, Sirrah!

Sharp. Do you be wise, and take it, Sir. But to be serious, you certainly have spent your fortune, and outlived your credit, as your pockets and belly can testify: your father has disowned you; all your friends forsook you, except myself, who am starving with you. Now, Sir, if you marry this young lady, who as yet, thank heaven, knows nothing of your misfortunes, and by that means procure a better fortune than that you squandered away, make a good husband, and turn economist, you still may be happy, may still be Sir William's

heir, and the lady too no loser by the bargain; there's reason and argument, Sir.

Gay. 'Twas with that prospect I first made love to her; and though my fortune has been ill spent, I have, at least, purchased discretion with it.

Sharp. Pray then convince me of that, Sir, and make no more objections to the marriage. You see I am reduced to my waistcoat already; and when necessity has undressed me from top to toe, she must begin with you; and then we shall be forced to keep house and die by inches. Look you, Sir, if you won't resolve to take my advice, while you have one coat to your back, I must e'en take to my heels while I have strength to run, and something to cover me: so, Sir, wishing you much comfort and consolation with your bare conscience, I am your most obedient and half-starved friend and servant.

[*Going.*

Gay. Hold, Sharp, you won't leave me.

Sharp. I must eat, Sir; by my honour and appetite I must!

Gay. Well then, I am resolved to favour the cheat, and as I shall quite change my former course of life, happy may be the consequences; at least of this I am sure—

Sharp. That you can't be worse than you are at present.

Gay. [*A knocking without.*] —Who's there?

Sharp. Some of your former good friends, who favoured you with money at fifty *per cent.* and helped you to spend it; and are now become daily mementoes to you of the folly of trusting rogues, following whores, and laughing at my advice.

Gay. Cease your impertinence! to the door! If they

are duns, tell 'em my marriage is now certainly fixed, and persuade 'em still to forbear a few days longer, and keep my circumstances a secret for their sakes as well as my own.

Sharp. O never fear it, Sir: they still have so much friendship for you, not to desire your ruin to their own disadvantage.

Gay. And do you hear, Sharp, if it should be any body from Melissa, say I am not home, lest the bad appearance we make here should make 'em suspect something to our disadvantage.

Sharp. I'll obey you, Sir;—but I am afraid they will easily discover the consumptive situation of our affairs by my chop-fallen countenance. [*Exit* Sharp.

Gay. These very rascals who are now continually dunning and persecuting me, were the very persons who led me to my ruin, partook of my prosperity, and professed the greatest friendship.

Sharp. [*Without.*] Upon my word, Mistress Kitty, my master's not at home.

Kitty. [*Without.*] Look ye, Sharp, I must and will see him!

Gay. Ha, what do I hear? Melissa's maid! what has brought her here? my poverty has made her my enemy too—she is certainly come with no good intent—no friendship there, without fees—she's coming up stairs. —What must I do?—I'll get into this closet and listen. [*Exit* Gayless.

Enter Sharp *and* Kitty.

Kitty. I must know where he is, and will know too, Mr. Impertinence!

Sharp. Not of me you won't. [*Aside.*] He's not

within, I tell you, Mistress Kitty; I don't know myself: do you think I can conjure?

Kitty. But I know you will lie abominably; therefore don't trifle with me. I come from Mistress Melissa; you know, I suppose, what's to be done to-morrow morning?

Sharp. Ay, and to-morrow night too, girl!

Kitty. Not if I can help it. [*Aside*.]—But come, where is your master? for see him I must.

Sharp. Pray, Mistress Kitty, what's your opinion of this match between my master and your mistress?

Kitty. Why I have no opinion of it at all; and yet most of our wants will be relieved by it too: for instance now, your master will get a fortune, that's what I'm afraid he wants; my mistress will get a husband, that's what she has wanted for some time: you will have the pleasure of my conversation, and I an opportunity of breaking your head for your impertinence.

Sharp. Madam, I'm your most humble servant! but I'll tell you what, Mistress Kitty, I am positively against the match; for, was I a man of my master's fortune—

Kitty. You'd marry if you could and mend it. Ha, ha, ha! Pray, Sharp, where does your master's estate lie!

Gay. Oh the devil! what a question was there! [*Aside*.

Sharp. Lie, lie? why it lies—faith, I can't name any particular place, it lies in so many: his effects are divided, some here, some there; his steward hardly knows himself.

Kitty. Scattered, scattered, I suppose. But hark'ee, Sharp, what's become of your furniture? You seem to be a little bare here at present.

Gay. What, has she found out that too? [*Aside*.

Sharp. Why, you must know, as soon as the wedding was fixed, my master ordered me to remove his goods into a friend's house, to make room for a ball which he designs to give here the day after the marriage.

Kitty. The luckiest thing in the world! for my mistress designs to have a ball and entertainment here to-night before the marriage; and that's my business with your master.

Sharp. The devil it is! [*Aside.*

Kitty. She'll not have it public; she designs to invite only eight or ten couple of friends.

Sharp. No more?

Kitty. No more: and she ordered me to desire your master not to make a great entertainment.

Sharp. Oh, never fear—

Kitty. Ten or a dozen little nice things, with some fruit, I believe, will be enough in all conscience.

Sharp. Oh, curse your conscience! [*Aside.*

Kitty. And what do you think I have done of my own head.

Sharp. What?

Kitty. I have invited all my lord Stately's servants to come and see you, and have a dance in the kitchen: won't your master be surprised!

Sharp. Much so indeed!

Kitty. Well, be quick and find out your master, and make what haste you can with your preparations: you have no time to lose.—Prithee, Sharp, what's the matter with you? I have not seen you for some time, and you seem to look a little thin.

Sharp. Oh my unfortunate face! [*Aside.*] I'm in pure good health, thank you, Mistress Kitty; and I'll

assure you, I have a very good stomach, never better in all my life, and I am as full of vigour, hussy!

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Kitty. What, with that face! well, bye, bye. [*Going.*] —Oh, Sharp, what ill-looking fellows are those, were standing about your door when I came in? They want your master too, I suppose.

Sharp. Hum? yes, they are waiting for him.—They are some of his tenants out of the country that want to pay him some money.

Kitty. Tenants! what, do you let his tenants stand in the street?

Sharp. They choose it; as they seldom come to town, they are willing to see as much of it as they can, when they do; they are raw, ignorant, honest people.

Kitty. Well, I must run home, farewell!—But do you hear? Get something substantial for us in the kitchen—a ham, a turkey, or what you will—we'll be very merry; and, be sure, remove the tables and chairs away there too, that we may have room to dance: I can't bear to be confined in my French dances; tal, lal, lal, [*Dancing.*] Well, adieu? Without any compliment, I shall die if I don't see you soon. [*Exit* Kitty.

Sharp. And without any compliment, I pray heaven you may!

Enter Gayless.

[*They look for some time sorrowfully at each other.*]

Gay. Oh, Sharp!

Sharp. Oh master!

Gay. We are certainly undone!

Sharp. That's no news to me.

Gay. Eight or ten couple of dancers—ten or a dozen

little nice dishes, with some fruit—my lord Stately's servants, ham and turkey!

Sharp. Say no more, the very sound creates an appetite: and I am sure of late I have had no occasion for whetters and provocatives.

Gay. Cursed misfortune! what can we do?

Sharp. Hang ourselves; I see no other remedy; except you have a receipt to give a ball and a supper without meat or music.

Gay. Melissa has certainly heard of my bad circumstances, and has invented this scheme to distress me, and break off the match.

Sharp. I don't believe it, Sir; begging your pardon.

Gay. No, why did her maid then make so strict an inquiry into my fortune and affairs?

Sharp. For two very substantial reasons: the first, to satisfy a curiosity, natural to her as a woman; the second, to have the pleasure of my conversation, very natural to her as a woman of taste and understanding.

Gay. Prithee be more serious: is not our all at stake?

Sharp. Yes, Sir: and yet that all of ours is of so little consequence, that a man, with a very small share of philosophy, may part from it without much pain or uneasiness. However, Sir, I'll convince you in half an hour, that Mistress Melissa knows nothing of your circumstances, and I'll tell you what too, Sir, she shan't be here to-night, and yet you shall marry her to-morrow morning.

Gay. How, how, dear Sharp!

Sharp. 'Tis here, here, Sir! warm, warm, and delays will cool it; therefore I'll away to her, and do you be as merry as love and poverty will permit you.

Would you succeed, a faithful friend depute,
Whose head can plan, and front can execute.

I am the man, and I hope you neither dispute my friendship or qualifications.

Gay. Indeed I don't. Prithee be gone.

Sharp. I fly. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Melissa's *Lodgings.*

Enter Melissa *and* Kitty.

Mel. You surprise me, Kitty! the master not at home! the man in confusion? no furniture in the house! and ill-looking fellows about the doors! 'Tis all a riddle.

Kitty. But very easy to be explained.

Mel. Prithee explain it then, nor keep me longer in suspense.

Kitty. The affair is this, madam, Mr. Gayless is over head and ears in debt; you are over head and ears in love; you'll marry him to-morrow; the next day, your whole fortune goes to his creditors, and you and your children are to live comfortably upon the remainder.

Mel. I cannot think him base.

Kitty. But I know they are all base—you are very young, and very ignorant of the sex; I am young too, but have more experience. You never was in love before; I have been in love with an hundred, and tried 'em all; and know 'em to be a parcel of barbarous, perjured, deluding, bewitching devils.

Mel. The low wretches you have had to do with may answer the character you give 'em; but Mr. Gayless—

Kitty. Is a man, madam.

Mel. I hope so, Kitty, or I would have nothing to do with him.

Kitty. With all my heart—I have given you my sentiments upon the occasion, and shall leave you to your own inclinations.

Mel. Oh, madam, I am much obliged to you for your great condescension, ha, ha, ha! However, I have so great a regard for your opinion, that had I certain proofs of his villainy—

Kitty. Of his poverty you may have a hundred: I am sure I have had none to the contrary.

Mel. Oh, there the shoe pinches. [*Aside.*

Kitty. Nay, so far from giving me the usual perquisites of my place, he has not so much as kept me in temper with little endearing civilities; and one might reasonably expect when a man is deficient in one way, that he should make it up in another.

[*Knocking without.*

Mel. See who's at the door. [*Exit* Kitty.]—I must be cautious how I hearken too much to this girl; her bad opinion of Mr. Gayless seems to arise from his disregard of her.

Enter Sharp *and* Kitty.

So, Sharp; have you found your master? will things be ready for the ball and entertainment?

Sharp. To your wishes, madam. I have just now bespoke the music and supper, and wait now for your ladyship's further commands.

Mel. My compliments to your master, and let him

know I and my company will be with him by six; we design to drink tea, and play at cards, before we dance.

Kitty. So shall I and my company, Mr. Sharp. [*Aside.*

Sharp. Mighty well, madam!

Mel. Prithee, Sharp, what makes you come without your coat? 'Tis too cool to go so airy, sure.

Kitty. Mr. Sharp, madam, is of a very hot constitution, ha, ha, ha!

Sharp. If it had been ever so cool I have had enough to warm me since I came from home, I'm sure; but no matter for that. [*Sighing.*

Mel. What d'ye mean?

Sharp. Pray don't ask me, madam; I beseech you don't: let us change the subject.

Kitty. Insist upon knowing it, madam—my curiosity must be satisfied, or I shall burst. [*Aside.*

Mel. I do insist upon knowing—on pain of my displeasure, tell me!

Sharp. If my master should know—I must not tell you, madam, indeed.

Mel. I promise you, upon my honour, he never shall.

Sharp. But can your ladyship insure secrecy from that quarter?

Kitty. Yes, Mr. Jackanapes, for anything you can say.

Mel. I'll engage for her.

Sharp. Why then, in short, madam—I cannot tell you.

Mel. Don't trifle with me.

Sharp. Then since you will have it, madam,—I lost my coat in defence of your reputation.

Mel. In defence of my reputation!

Sharp. I will assure you, madam, I've suffered very

much in defence of it; which is more than I would have done for my own.

Mel. Prithee explain.

Sharp. In short, madam, you were seen, about a month ago, to make a visit to my master alone.

Mel. Alone! my servant was with me.

Sharp. What, Mistress Kitty? so much the worse; for she was looked upon as my property; and I was brought in guilty as well as you and my master.

Kitty. What, your property, Jackanapes!

Mel. What is all this?

Sharp. Why, madam, as I came out but now to make preparations for you and your company to-night, Mrs. Pryabout, the attorney's wife at next door, calls to me: "Hark'ee fellow!" says she, "Do you and your modest master know that my husband shall indict your house, at the next parish meeting, for a nuisance?"

Mel. A nuisance!

Sharp. I said so:—"A nuisance! I believe none in the neighbourhood live with more decency and regularity than I and my master," as is really the case. "Decency and regularity!" cries she, with a sneer,—"why, Sirrah, does not my window look into your master's bed chamber? And did not he bring in a certain lady, such a day?"—describing you, madam. "And did not I see—"

Mel. See! oh scandalous! what?

Sharp. Modesty requires my silence.

Mel. Did not you contradict her?

Sharp. Contradict her! why, I told her I was sure she lied: "For, zounds!" said I,—for I could not help swearing,—"I am so well convinced of the lady's and my master's prudence, that, I am sure, had they a mind

to amuse themselves they would certainly have drawn the window-curtains."

Mel. What, did you do nothing else? Did not you convince her of her error and impertinence?

Sharp. She swore to such things, that I could do nothing but swear and call names: upon which out bolts her husband upon me, with a fine taper crab in his hand and fell upon me with such violence, that, being half delirious, I made a full confession.

Mel. A full confession! what did you confess?

Sharp. That my master loved fornication; that you had no aversion to it; that Mistress Kitty was a bawd, and your humble servant a pimp.

Kitty. A bawd! a bawd! do I look like a bawd, madam?

Sharp. And so, madam, in the scuffle, my coat was torn to pieces as well as your reputation.

Mel. And so you joined to make me infamous!

Sharp. For heaven's sake madam, what could I do? his proofs fell so thick upon me, as witness my head, [*Showing his head plastered.*] that I would have given up all the maidenheads in the kingdom, rather than have my brains beat to a jelly.

Mel. Very well!—but I'll be revenged!—and did not you tell your master of this?

Sharp. Tell him, no madam; had I told him, his love is so violent for you, that he would certainly have murdered half the attornies in town by this time.

Mel. Very well! but I'm resolved not to go to your master's to-night.

Sharp. Heavens and my impudence be praised.

[*Aside.*

Kitty. Why not, madam? If you are not guilty, face your accusers.

Sharp. Oh the devil! ruined again! [*Aside.*] To be sure, face 'em by all means, madam—they can but be abusive, and break the windows a little:—besides, madam, I have thought of a way to make this affair quite diverting to you—I have a fine blunderbuss charged with half a hundred slugs, and my master has a delicate large Swiss broadsword; and between us, madam, we shall so pepper and slice 'em, that you will die with laughing.

Mel. What, at murder?

Kitty. Don't fear, madam, there will be no murder if Sharp's concerned.

Sharp. Murder, madam! 'tis self-defence; besides, in these sort of skirmishes, there are never more than two or three killed: for, supposing they bring the whole body of militia upon us, down with a brace of them, and away fly the rest of the covey.

Mel. Persuade me never so much, I won't go; that's my resolution.

Kitty. Why then, I'll tell you what, madam; since you are resolved not to go to the supper, suppose the supper was to come to you: 'tis great pity such great preparations as Mr. Sharp has made should be thrown away.

Sharp. So it is, as you say, Mistress Kitty. But I can immediately run back and unbespeak what I have ordered; 'tis soon done.

Mel. But then what excuse can I send to your master? He'll be very uneasy at my not coming.

Sharp. Oh terribly so!—but I have it—I'll tell him

you are very much out of order—that you were suddenly taken with the vapours or qualms; or what you please, madam.

Mel. I'll leave it to you, Sharp, to make my apology; and there's half a guinea for you to help your invention.

Sharp. Half a guinea?—'tis so long since I had anything to do with money, that I scarcely know the current coin of my own country. Oh, Sharp, what talents hast thou! to secure thy master; deceive his mistress; out-lie her chambermaid; and yet be paid for thy honesty? But my joy will discover me. [*Aside.*] Madam, you have eternally fixed Timothy Sharp your most obedient humble servant!—Oh the delights of impudence and a good understanding! [*Exit* Sharp.

Kitty. Ha, ha, ha! was there ever such a lying varlet? with his slugs and his broadswords; his attorneys and broken heads, and nonsense! well, madam, are you satisfied now? do you want more proofs?

Mel. Of your modesty I do: but I find, you are resolved to give me none.

Kitty. Madam?

Mel. I see through your little mean artifice: you are endeavouring to lessen Mr. Gayless in my opinion, because he has not paid you for services he had no occasion for.

Kitty. Pay me, madam! I am sure I have very little occasion to be angry with Mr. Gayless for not paying me, when, I believe, 'tis his general practice.

Mel. 'Tis false! he's a gentleman and a man of honour, and you are—

Kitty. Not in love, thank heaven! [*Curtsying.*

Mel. You are a fool.

Kitty. I have been in love; but I am much wiser now.

Mel. Hold your tongue, impertinence!

Kitty. That's the severest thing she has said yet.

[*Aside.*

Mel. Leave me.

Kitty. Oh this love, this love is the devil!

[*Exit* Kitty.

Mel. We discover our weaknesses to our servants, make them our confidants, put 'em upon equality with us, and so they become our advisers—Sharp's behaviour, though I seemed to disregard it, makes me tremble with apprehensions; and though I have pretended to be angry with Kitty for her advice, I think it of too much consequence to be neglected.

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. May I speak, madam?

Mel. Don't be a fool. What do you want?

Kitty. There is a servant just come out of the country says he belongs to Sir William Gayless, and has got a letter for you from his master, upon very urgent business.

Mel. Sir William Gayless! What can this mean? where is the man?

Kitty. In the little parlour, madam.

Mel. I'll go to him—my heart flutters strangely.

[*Exit* Melissa.

Kitty. Oh woman, woman, foolish woman! she'll certainly have this Gayless: nay, were she as well convinced of his poverty as I am, she'd have him.—A strong dose of love is worse than one of ratafia; when it once gets into our heads, it trips up our heels, and then good

night to discretion. Here is she going to throw away fifteen thousand pounds; upon what? faith, little better than nothing.—he's a man, and that's all—and heaven knows mere man is but small consolation.

Be this advice pursued by each fond maid,
Ne'er slight the substance for an empty shade:
Rich, weighty sparks alone should please and charm ye:
For should spouse cool, his gold will always warm ye.

End of the First Act.

ACT II.

Enter GAYLESS *and* SHARP.

Gay. Prithee be serious, Sharp. Hast thou really succeeded?

Sharp. To our wishes, Sir. In short I have managed the business with such skill and dexterity, that neither your circumstances nor my veracity are suspected.

Gay. But how hast thou excused me from the ball and entertainment?

Sharp. Beyond expectation, Sir.—But in that particular I was obliged to have recourse to truth, and declare the real situation of your affairs. I told her we had so long disused ourselves to dressing either dinners or suppers, that I was afraid we should be but awkward in our preparations. In short, Sir,—at that instant a cursed gnawing seized my stomach, that I could not help telling her, that both you and myself seldom make a good meal now-a-days once in a quarter of a year.

Gay. Hell and confusion, have you betrayed me, villain! Did you not tell me this moment, she did not in the least suspect my circumstances?

Sharp. No more she did, Sir, till I told her.

Gay. Very well; and was this your skill and dexterity?

Sharp. I was going to tell you; but you won't hear reason; my melancholy face and piteous narration had such an effect upon her generous bowels, that she freely forgives all that's past.

Gay. Does she, Sharp?

Sharp. Yes; and desires never to see your face again; and, as a further consideration for so doing, she has sent you half a guinea. [*Shows the money.*

Gay. What do you mean?

Sharp. To spend it, spend it, Sir; and regale.

Gay. Villain, you have undone me!

Sharp. What, by bringing you money, when you are not worth a farthing in the whole world? Well, well, then to make you happy again, I'll keep it myself; and wish somebody would take it in their head to load me with such misfortunes. [*Puts up the money.*

Gay. Do you laugh at me, rascal!

Sharp. Who deserves more to be laughed at! ha, ha, ha! Never for the future, Sir, dispute the success of my negotiations, when even you, who know me so well, can't help swallowing my hook. Why, Sir, I could have played with you backwards and forwards at the end of my line, till I had put your senses into such a fermentation, that you should not have known in an hour's time, whether you was a fish or a man.

Gay. Why, what is all this you have been telling me?

Sharp. A downright lie from beginning to end.

Gay. And have you really excused me to her?

Sharp. No, Sir; but I have got this half guinea to make her excuses to you! And, instead of a confederacy between you and me to deceive her, she thinks she has brought me over to put the deceit upon you.

Gay. Thou excellent fellow!

Sharp. Don't lose time, but slip out of the house immediately; the back way, I believe, will be the safest for you, and to her as fast as you can; pretend vast surprise and concern, that her indisposition has

debarred you the pleasure of her company here to-night: you need know no more, away!

Gay. But what shall we do, Sharp? here's her maid again.

Sharp. The devil she is—I wish I could poison her; for I'm sure, while she lives, I can never prosper.

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. Your door was open, so I did not stand upon ceremony.

Gay. I am sorry to hear your mistress is taken so suddenly.

Kitty. Vapours, vapours only, Sir, a few matrimonial omens, that's all; but I suppose, Mr. Sharp has made her excuses.

Gay. And tells me I can't have the pleasure of her company, to-night. I had made a small preparation; but 'tis no matter: Sharp shall go to the rest of the company; and let 'em know 'tis put off.

Kitty. Not for the world, Sir; my mistress was sensible you must have provided for her, and the rest of the company; so is she resolved, though she can't, the other ladies and gentlemen shall partake of your entertainment; she's very good-natured.

Sharp. I had better run, and let 'em know 'tis deferred. [*Going.*

Kitty. [*Stopping him.*] I have been with 'em already, and told 'em my mistress insists upon their coming, and they have all promised to be here; so, pray, don't be under any apprehensions, that your preparations will be thrown away.

Gay. But as I can't have her company, Mistress Kitty,

'twill be a greater pleasure to me, and a greater compliment to her to defer our mirth; besides I can't enjoy anything at present, and she not partake of it.

Kitty. Oh, no, to be sure; but what can I do? My mistress will have it so, and Mrs. Gadabout, and the rest of the company will be here in a few minutes; there are two or three coachfuls of 'em.

Sharp. Then my master must be ruined in spite of my parts.

Gay. [*Aside to* Sharp.] 'Tis all over, Sharp.

Sharp. I know it, Sir.

Gay. I shall go distracted; what shall I do?

Sharp. Why, Sir, as our rooms are a little out of furniture at present, take 'em into the captain's that lodges here, and set 'em down to cards; if he should come in the meantime, I'll excuse you to him.

Kitty. I have disconcerted their affairs, I find; I'll have some sport with 'em.—Pray, Mr. Gayless, don't order too many things, they only make you a friendly visit; the more ceremony, you know, the less welcome. Pray, Sir, let me entreat you not to be profuse. If I can be of service, pray command me; my mistress has sent me on purpose; while Mr. Sharp is doing the business without doors, I may be employed within; if you'll lend me the keys of your side-board [*To* Sharp.] I'll dispose of your plate to the best advantage. [*Knocking.*

Sharp. Thank you, Mistress Kitty; but it is disposed of already. [*Knocking at the door.*

Kitty. Bless me, the company's come, I'll go to the door and conduct 'em into your presence. [*Exit* Kitty.

Sharp. If you'd conduct 'em into a horse-pond, and

wait of 'em there yourself, we should be more obliged to you.

Gay. I can never support this!

Sharp. Rouse your spirits and put on an air of gaiety, and I don't despair of bringing you off yet.

Gay. Your words have done it effectually.

Enter Mrs. Gadabout, *her Daughter and Niece, Mr.* Guttle, *Mr.* Trippet *and Mrs.* Trippet.

Gad. Ah my dear, Mr. Gayless! [*Kisses him.*

Gay. My dear widow! [*Kisses her.*

Gad. We are come to give you joy, Mr. Gayless.

Sharp. You never was more mistaken in your life. [*Aside.*

Gad. I have brought you some company here, I believe, is not so well known to you, and I protest I have been all about the town to get the little I have—Prissy, my dear—Mr. Gayless, my daughter.

Gay. And as handsome as her mother; you must have a husband shortly, my dear.

Pris. I'll assure you I don't despair, Sir.

Gad. My niece too.

Gay. I know by her eyes she belongs to you, widow.

Gad. Mr. Guttle, Sir, Mr. Gayless; Mr. Gayless, Justice Guttle.

Gay. Oh destruction! one of the *quorum.*

Gut. Hem, though I had not the honour of any personal knowledge of you, yet at the instigation of Mrs. Gadabout, I have, without any previous acquaintance with you, thrown aside all ceremony to let you know that I joy to hear the solemnization of your nuptials is so near at hand.

Gay. Sir, though I cannot answer you with the same elocution, however, Sir, I thank you with the same sincerity.

Gad. Mr. and Mrs. Trippet, Sir, the properest lady in the world for your purpose, for she'll dance for four and twenty hours together.

Trip. My dear Charles, I am very angry with you, faith; so near marriage and not let me know, 'twas barbarous; you thought I should rally you upon it; but dear Mrs. Trippet here has long ago eradicated all my antimatrimonial principles.

Mrs. Trip. I eradicate! fie, Mr. Trippet, don't be so obscene.

Kitty. Pray, ladies, walk into the next room; Mr. Sharp can't lay his cloth till you are set down to cards.

Gad. One thing I had quite forgot; Mr. Gayless, my nephew who you never saw, will be in town from France presently, so I left word to send him here immediately to make one.

Gay. You do me honour, madam.

Sharp. Do the ladies choose cards or supper first?

Gay. Supper! what does the fellow mean?

Gut. Oh, the supper by all means, for I have eat nothing to signify since dinner.

Sharp. Nor I, since last Monday was a fortnight.

[*Aside.*

Gay. Pray, ladies, walk into the next room: Sharp, get things ready for supper, and call the music.

Sharp. Well said, master.

Gay. Without ceremony, ladies. [*Exit with ladies.*

Kitty. I'll to my mistress, and let her know everything is ready for her appearance. [*Exit* Kitty.

Guttle *and* Sharp.

Gut. Pray Mr. what's your name, don't be long with supper; but hark'ee, what can I do in the mean time? Suppose you get me a pipe and some good wine; I'll try to divert myself that way till supper's ready.

Sharp. Or suppose, Sir, you was to take a nap till then, there's a very easy couch in that closet.

Gut. The best thing in the world. I'll take your advice, but be sure to wake me when supper is ready.

[*Exit* Guttle.

Sharp. Pray heav'n you may not wake till then—what a fine situation my master is in at present! I have promised him my assistance, but his affairs are in so desperate a way, that I am afraid 'tis out of all my skill to recover 'em. Well, fools have fortune, says an old proverb, and a very true one it is, for my master and I are two of the most unfortunate mortals in the creation.

Enter Gayless.

Gay. Well, Sharp, I have set 'em down to cards, and now what have you to propose?

Sharp. I have one scheme left which in all probability may succeed. The good citizen overloaded with his last meal, is taking a nap in that closet, in order to get him an appetite for yours. Suppose, Sir, we should make him treat us.

Gay. I don't understand you.

Sharp. I'll pick his pocket, and provide us a supper with the booty.

Gay. Monstrous! for without considering the villainy of it, the danger of waking him makes it impracticable.

Sharp. If he wakes, I'll smother him, and lay his death to indigestion—a very common death among the justices.

Gay. Prithee be serious, we have no time to lose; can you invent nothing to drive 'em out of the house?

Sharp. I can fire it.

Gay. Shame and confusion so perplex me, I cannot give myself a moment's thought.

Sharp. I have it; did not Mrs. Gadabout say her nephew would be here?

Gay. She did.

Sharp. Say no more, but into your company; if I don't send 'em out of the house for the night, I'll at least frighten their stomachs away; and if this stratagem fails, I'll relinquish politics, and think my understanding no better than my neighbours'.

Gay. How shall I reward thee, Sharp?

Sharp. By your silence and obedience; away to your company, Sir. [*Exit* Gayless. Now, dear madam Fortune, for once, open your eyes, and behold a poor unfortunate man of parts addressing you; now is your time to convince your foes you are not that blind whimsical whore they take you for; but let them see by your assisting me, that men of sense, as well as fools, are sometimes entitled to your favour and protection.—So much for prayer, now for a great noise and lie. [*Goes aside and cries out.* Help, help, master; help, gentlemen, ladies; murder, fire, brimstone; help, help, help!

Enter Mr. Gayless *and the ladies, with cards in their hands, and* Sharp *enters running, and meets them.*

Gay. What's the matter?

Sharp. Matter, Sir, if you don't run this minute with that gentleman, this lady's nephew will be murdered; I am sure 'twas he. He was set upon the corner of the street, by four; he has killed two, and if you don't make haste, he'll be either murdered or took to prison.

Gad. For heaven's sake, gentlemen, run to his assistance. How I tremble for Melissa; this frolic of hers may be fatal. [*Aside.*

Gay. Draw, Sir, and follow me.

[*Exeunt* Gay. *and* Gad.

Trip. Not I; I don't care to run myself into needless quarrels; I have suffered too much formerly by flying into passions; besides I have pawned my honour to Mrs. Trippet, never to draw my sword again; and in her present condition, to break my word might have fatal consequences.

Sharp. Pray, Sir, don't excuse yourself, the young gentleman may be murdered by this time.

Trip. Then my assistance will be of no service to him; however—I'll go to oblige you, and look on at a distance.

Mrs. Trip. I shall certainly faint, Mr. Trippet, if you draw.

Enter Guttle, *disordered, as from sleep.*

Gut. What noise and confusion is this?

Sharp. Sir, there's a man murdered in the street.

Gut. Is that all—zounds, I was afraid you had throwed the supper down—a plague of your noise—I shan't recover my stomach this half hour.

Enter Gayless *and* Gadabout, *with* Melissa *in boy's clothes, dressed in the French manner.*

Gad. Well, but my dear Jemmy, you are not hurt, sure?

Mel. A little with riding post only.

Gad. Mr. Sharp alarmed us all with an account of your being set upon by four men; that you had killed two, and was attacking the other when he came away, and when we met you at the door, we were running to your rescue.

Mel. I had a small rencounter with half a dozen villains; but finding me resolute, they were wise enough to take to their heels; I believe I scratched some of 'em.

[*Laying her hand to her sword.*

Sharp. His vanity has saved my credit. I have a thought come into my head may prove to our advantage, provided Monsieur's ignorance bears any proportion to his impudence. [*Aside.*

Gad. Now my fright's over, let me introduce you, my dear, to Mr. Gayless; Sir, this is my nephew.

Gay. [*Saluting her.*] Sir, I shall be proud of your friendship.

Mel. I don't doubt but we shall be better acquainted in a little time.

Gut. Pray, Sir, what news in France?

Mel. Faith, Sir, very little that I know of in the political way; I had no time to spend among the politicians. I was—

Gay. Among the ladies, I suppose.

Mel. Too much, indeed. Faith, I have not philosophy enough to resist their solicitations; you take me.

[*To* Gayless *aside.*

Gay. Yes, to be a most incorrigible fop; 'sdeath, this puppy's impertinence is an addition to my misery.

[*Aside to* Sharp.

Mel. Poor Gayless, to what shifts is he reduced? I cannot bear to see him much longer in this condition; I shall discover myself. [*Aside to* Gadabout.

Gad. Not before the end of the play; besides, the more his pain now, the greater his pleasure when relieved from it.

Trip. Shall we return to our cards; I have a *sans prendre* here, and must insist you play it out.

Ladies. With all my heart.

Mel. Allons donc.

[*As the company goes out,* Sharp *pulls* Melissa *by the sleeve.*

Sharp. Sir, Sir, shall I beg leave to speak with you? Pray, did you find a bank-note in your way hither?

Mel. What, between here and Dover do you mean?

Sharp. No, Sir, within twenty or thirty yards of this house.

Mel. You are drunk, fellow.

Sharp. I am undone, Sir; but not drunk, I'll assure you.

Mel. What is all this?

Sharp. I'll tell you, Sir: a little while ago my master sent me out to change a note of twenty pounds; but I, unfortunately hearing a noise in the street of, "damn-me," Sir, and clashing of swords, and "rascal," and "murder"; I runs up to the place, and saw four men upon one; and having heard you was a mettlesome young gentleman, I immediately concluded it must be you; so ran back to call my master, and when I went to look for

the note to change it, I found it gone, either stole or lost; and if I don't get the money immediately, I shall certainly be turned out of my place, and lose my character.

Mel. I shall laugh in his face. [*Aside.*] Oh, I'll speak to your master about it, and he will forgive you at my intercession.

Sharp. Ah, Sir! you don't know my master.

Mel. I'm very little acquainted with him; but I have heard he's a very good-natured man.

Sharp. I have heard so too, but I have felt it otherwise; he has so much good-nature, that, if I could compound for one broken head a day, I should think myself very well off.

Mel. Are you serious, friend?

Sharp. Look'ee, Sir, I take you for a man of honour; there is something in your face that is generous, open, and masculine; you don't look like a foppish, effeminate tell-tale; so I'll venture to trust you.—See here, Sir. [*Shows his head.*] These are the effects of my master's good-nature.

Mel. Matchless impudence! [*Aside.*] Why do you live with him then after such usage?

Sharp. He's worth a great deal of money, and when he's drunk, which is commonly once a day, he's very free, and will give me any thing; but I design to leave him when he's married, for all that.

Mel. Is he going to be married then?

Sharp. To-morrow, Sir, and between you and I, he'll meet with his match, both for humour and something else too.

Mel. What, she drinks too?

Sharp. Damnably, Sir; but mum.—You must know

this entertainment was designed for madam to-night; but she got so very gay after dinner, that she could not walk out of her own house; so her maid, who was half gone too, came here with an excuse, that Mistress Melissa had got the vapours, and so she had indeed violently; here, here, Sir. [*Pointing to his head.*

Mel. This is scarcely to be borne. [*Aside.*] Melissa! I have heard of her; they say she's very whimsical.

Sharp. A very woman, and, please your honour, between you and I, none of the mildest or wisest of her sex—but to return, Sir, to the twenty pounds.

Mel. I am surprised you who have got so much money in his service, should be at a loss for twenty pounds, to save your bones at this juncture.

Sharp. I have put all my money out at interest; I never keep above five pounds by me; and if your honour would lend me the other fifteen, and take my note for it. [*Knocking.*

Mel. Somebody's at the door.

Sharp. I can give very good security. [*Knocking.*

Mel. Don't let the people wait, Mr.—

Sharp. Ten pounds will do. [*Knocking.*

Mel. Allez vous en.

Sharp. Five, Sir. [*Knocking.*

Mel. Je ne puis pas.

Sharp. Je ne puis pas.—I find we shan't understand one another, I do but lose time; and, if I had any thought, I might have known young fops return from their travels generally with as little money as improvement. [*Exit* Sharp.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha, what lies doth this fellow invent, and what rogueries does he commit for his master's serv-

ice? There never sure was a more faithful servant to his master, or a greater rogue to the rest of mankind. But here he comes again; the plot thickens; I'll in and observe Gayless. [*Exit* Melissa.

Enter Sharp *before several persons with dishes in their hands, and a cook, drunk.*

Sharp. Fortune, I thank thee. The most lucky accident! [*Aside.*] This way, gentlemen, this way.

Cook. I am afraid I have mistook the house. Is this Mr. Treatwell's?

Sharp. The same, the same: what, don't you know me?

Cook. Know you!—Are you sure there was a supper bespoke here?

Sharp. Yes: upon my honour, Mr. Cook, the company is in the next room, and must have gone without, had not you brought it. I'll draw a table. I see you have brought a cloth with you; but you need not have done that, for we have a very good stock of linen—at the pawnbroker's. [*Aside.*

[*Exit, and returns immediately, drawing in a table.*] Come, come my boys, be quick, the company began to be very uneasy; but I knew my old friend Lick-spit here would not fail us.

Cook. Lick-spit! I am no friend of yours; so I desire less familiarity: Lick-spit too!

Enter Gayless, *and stares.*

Gay. What is all this?

Sharp. Sir, if the sight of the supper is offensive, I can easily have it removed. [*Aside to* Gayless.

Gay. Prithee explain thyself, Sharp.

Sharp. Some of our neighbours, I suppose, have be-

spoke this supper; but the Cook has drank away his memory, forgot the house, and brought it here; however, Sir, if you dislike it, I'll tell him of his mistake, and send him about his business.

Gay. Hold, hold, necessity obliges me against my inclination to favour the cheat, and feast at my neighbour's expense.

Cook. Hark you, friend, is that your master?

Sharp. Ay, and the best master in the world.

Cook. I'll speak to him then.—Sir, I have according to your commands, dressed as genteel a supper as my art and your price would admit of.

Sharp. Good again, Sir, 'tis paid for.

[*Aside to* Gayless.

Gay. I don't in the least question your abilities, Mr. Cook, and I am obliged to you for your care.

Cook. Sir, you are a gentleman,—and if you would but look over the bill and approve it, [*Pulls out a bill.*] you will over and above return the obligation.

Sharp. Oh the devil!

Gay. [*Looking on a bill.*] Very well, I'll send my man to pay you to-morrow.

Cook. I'll spare him that trouble, and take it with me. Sir—I never work but for ready money.

Gay. Hah?

Sharp. Then you won't have our custom. [*Aside.*] My master is busy now, friend; do you think he won't pay you?

Cook. No matter what I think; either my meat or my money.

Sharp. 'Twill be very ill-convenient for him to pay you to-night.

Cook. Then I'm afraid it will be ill-convenient to pay me to-morrow, so d'ye hear—

Enter Melissa.

Gay. Prithee be advised, 'sdeath, I shall be discovered. [*Takes the cook aside.*

Mel. [*To* Sharp.] What's the matter?

Sharp. The Cook has not quite answered my master's expectations about the supper, Sir, and he's a little angry at him. That's all.

Mel. Come, come, Mr. Gayless, don't be uneasy; a bachelor cannot be supposed to have things in the utmost regularity; we don't expect it.

Cook. But I do expect it, and will have it.

Mel. What does that drunken fool say?

Cook. That I will have my money, and I won't stay till to-morrow—and, and—

Sharp. [*Runs and stops his mouth.*] Hold, hold, what are you doing? are you mad?

Mel. What do you stop the man's breath for?

Sharp. Sir, he was going to call you names.—Don't be abusive, Cook; the gentleman is a man of honour, and said nothing to you; pray be pacified; you are in liquor.

Cook. I will have my—

Sharp. [*Holding, still.*] Why, I tell you, fool, you mistake the gentleman; he is a friend of my master's, and has not said a word to you.—Pray, good Sir, go into the next room; the fellow's drunk, and takes you for another.—You'll repent this when you are sober, friend. —Pray, Sir, don't stay to hear his impertinence.

Gay. Pray, sir, walk in—he's below your anger.

Mel. Damn the rascal! What does he mean by

affronting me!—Let the scoundrel go; I'll polish his brutality, I warrant you: here's the best reformer of manners in the universe. [*Draws his sword.*] Let him go, I say.

Sharp. So, so you have done finely, now.—Get away as fast as you can: he's the most courageous mettlesome man in all England.—Why, if his passion was up he could eat you.—Make your escape, you fool!

Cook. I won't.—Eat me! he'll find me damned hard of digestion though—

Sharp. Prithee come here; let me speak with you.

[*They walk aside.*

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. Gad's me, is supper on the table already?—Sir, pray defer it for a few moments; my mistress is much better, and will be here immediately.

Gay. Will she indeed! bless me—I did not expect—but however—Sharp?

Kitty. What success, madam? [*Aside to* Melissa.

Mel. As we could wish, girl—but he is in such pain and perplexity I can't hold it out much longer.

Kitty. Ay, that not holding out is the ruin of half our sex.

Sharp. I have pacified the Cook, and if you can but borrow twenty pieces of that young prig, all may go well yet; you may succeed though I could not: remember what I told you—about it straight, Sir—

Gay. Sir, Sir, [*To* Melissa.] I beg to speak a word with you; my servant, Sir, tells me he has had the misfortune, Sir, to lose a note of mine of twenty pounds, which I sent him to receive—and the bankers' shops being shut up, and having very little cash by me, I

should be much obliged to you, if you would favour me with twenty pieces till to-morrow.

Mel. Oh, Sir, with all my heart, [*Taking out her purse.*] and as I have a small favour to beg of you, Sir, the obligation will be mutual.

Gay. How may I oblige you, Sir?

Mel. You are to be married, I hear, to Melissa.

Gay. To-morrow, Sir.

Mel. Then you'll oblige me, Sir, by never seeing her again.

Gay. Do you call this a small favour, Sir!

Mel. A mere trifle, Sir—breaking of contracts, suing for divorces, committing adultery, and such like, are all reckoned trifles now-a-days; and smart young fellows, like you and myself, Gayless, should never be out of fashion.

Gay. But pray, Sir, how are you concerned in this affair!

Mel. Oh, Sir, you must know I have a very great regard for Melissa, and, indeed, she for me; and, by the by, I have a most despicable opinion of you; for *entre nous*, I take you, Charles, to be a very great scoundrel.

Gay. Sir!

Mel. Nay, don't look fierce, Sir! and give yourself airs—damme, Sir, I shall be through your body else in the snapping of a finger.

Gay. I'll be as quick as you, villain!

[*Draws and makes at* Melissa.

Kitty. Hold, hold, murder! you'll kill my mistress—the young gentleman I mean.

Gay. Ah! her mistress! [*Drops his sword.*

Sharp. How! Melissa! nay, then drive away cart—all's over now.

Enter all the company laughing.

Gad. What, Mr. Gayless, engaged with Melissa before your time. Ah, ah, ah!

Kitty. Your humble servant, good Mr. Politician. [*To* Sharp.] This is, gentlemen and ladies, the most celebrated and ingenious Timothy Sharp, schemer general, and redoubted squire to the most renowned and fortunate adventurer Charles Gayless, knight of the woeful countenance: ha, ha, ha!—Oh that dismal face and more dismal head of yours.

[*Strikes* Sharp *upon the head.*

Sharp. 'Tis cruel in you to disturb a man in his last agonies.

Mel. Now, Mr. Gayless!—what, not a word! you are sensible I can be no stranger to your misfortunes, and I might reasonably expect an excuse for your ill treatment of me.

Gay. No, madam, silence is my only refuge; for to endeavour to vindicate my crimes would show a greater want of virtue than even the commission of 'em.

Mel. Oh, Gayless! 'twas poor to impose upon a woman, and one that loved you too.

Gay. Oh most unpardonable; but my necessities—

Sharp. And mine, madam, were not to be matched, I'm sure, o' this side starving.

Mel. His tears have softened me at once—your necessities, Mr. Gayless, with such real contrition, are too powerful motives not to affect the breast already prejudiced in your favour—you have suffered too much already for your extravagance; and as I take part in your

sufferings, 'tis easing myself to relieve you: know, therefore, all that's past I freely forgive.

Gay. You cannot mean it sure: I am lost in wonder.

Mel. Prepare yourself for more wonder—you have another friend in masquerade here: Mr. Cook, pray throw aside your drunkenness, and make your sober appearance—don't you know that face, Sir?

Cook. Ay, master, what, have you forgot your friend Dick, as you used to call me?

Gay. More wonder indeed! don't you live with my father?

Mel. Just after your hopeful servant there had left me, comes this man from Sir William with a letter to me; upon which (being by that wholly convinced of your necessitous condition) I invented, by the help of Kitty and Mrs. Gadabout, this little plot, in which your friend Dick there has acted miracles, resolving to tease you a little, that you might have a greater relish for a happy turn in your affairs. Now, Sir, read that letter, and complete your joy.

Gay. [Reads.] *Madam, I am father to the unfortunate young man, who, I hear by a friend of mine (that by my desire, has been a continual spy upon him) is making addresses to you: if he is so happy as to make himself agreeable to you (whose character I am charmed with) I shall own him with joy for my son, and forget his former follies.* I am,

Madam,

Your most humble servant,

William Gayless.

P. S. *I will be soon in town myself to congratulate his reformation and marriage.*

Oh, Melissa, this is too much; thus let me show my thanks and gratitude, [*Kneeling. She raises him.*] for here 'tis only due.

Sharp. A reprieve! a reprieve! a reprieve!

Kitty. I have been, Sir, a most bitter enemy to you; but since you are likely to be a little more conversant with cash than you have been, I am now, with the greatest sincerity, your most obedient friend and humble servant. And I hope, Sir, all former enmity will be forgotten.

Gay. Oh, Mistress Pry, I have been too much indulged with forgiveness myself not to forgive lesser offences in other people.

Sharp. Well then, madam, since my master has vouchsafed pardon to your handmaid Kitty, I hope you'll not deny it to his footman Timothy.

Mel. Pardon! for what?

Sharp. Only for telling you about ten thousand lies, madam, and, among the rest, insinuating that your ladyship would—

Mel. I understand you; and can forgive any thing, Sharp, that was designed for the service of your master; and if Pry and you will follow our example, I'll give her a small fortune as a reward for both your fidelities.

Sharp. I fancy, madam, 'twould be better to half the small fortune between us, and keep us both single: for as we shall live in the same house, in all probability we may taste the comforts of matrimony, and not be troubled with its inconveniencies. What say you, Kitty?

Kitty. Do you hear, Sharp, before you talk of the comforts of matrimony, taste the comforts of a good dinner, and recover your flesh a little; do, puppy.

Sharp. The devil backs her, that's certain; and I am no match for her at any weapon.

Mel. And now, Mr. Gayless, to show I have not provided for you by halves, let the music prepare themselves, and, with the approbation of the company, we'll have a dance.

All. By all means, a dance.

Gut. By all means a dance—after supper though—

Sharp. Oh, pray, Sir, have supper first, or, I'm sure, I shan't live till the dance is finished.

Gay. Behold, Melissa, as sincere a convert as ever truth and beauty made. The wild impetuous sallies of my youth are now blown over, and a most pleasing calm of perfect happiness succeeds.

Thus Aetna's flames the verdant earth consume,
But milder heat makes drooping nature bloom:
So virtuous love affords us springing joy,
Whilst vicious passions, as they burn, destroy.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. Garrick.

THAT I'm a lying rogue, you all agree:
And yet look round the world, and you will see
How many more, my betters, lie as fast as me.
Against this vice we all are ever railing,
And yet, so tempting is it, so prevailing,
You'll find but few without this useful failing.
Lady or Abigal, my lord or Will,
The lie goes round, and the ball's never still.
My lies were harmless, told to show my parts;
And not like those, when tongues belie their hearts.
In all professions you will find this flaw;
And in the gravest too, in physic and in law.
The gouty Sergeant cries, with formal pause,
"Your plea is good, my friend, don't starve the cause."
But when my lord decrees for t'other side,
Your costs of suit convince you—that he lied.
A doctor comes with formal wig and face,
First feels your pulse, then thinks and knows your case.
"Your fever's slight, not dang'rous, I assure you,
"Keep warm, and *repetitur haustus*, Sir, will cure you."
Around the bed, next day his friends are crying:
The patient dies, the doctor's paid for lying.
The poet, willing to secure the pit,
Gives out, his play has humour, taste and wit:
The cause comes on, and, while the judges try,
Each groan and catcall gives the bard the lie.
Now let us ask, pray, what the ladies do:

They too will fib a little *entre nous*,
"Lord!" says the prude (her face behind her fan)
"How can our sex have any joy in man?
"As for my part, the best could ne'er deceive me,
"And were the race extinct 'twould never grieve me:
"Their sight is odious, but their touch—O Gad!
"The thought of that's enough to drive one mad."
Thus rails at man the squeamish lady Dainty.
Yet weds, at fifty-five, a rake of twenty.
In short, a beau's intrigues, a lover's sighs,
The courtier's promise, the rich widow's cries,
And patriot's zeal, are seldom more than lies.
Sometimes you'll see a man belie his nation,
Nor to his country show the least relation.
For instance now—
A cleanly Dutchman, or a Frenchman grave,
A sober German, or a Spaniard brave,
An Englishman, a coward or a slave.
Mine, though a fibbing was an honest art:
I serv'd my master, play'd a faithful part:
Rank me not therefore 'mong the lying crew,
For, though my tongue was false, my heart was true.

THE END.

A PEEP
BEHIND THE CURTAIN;
OR,
The New Rehearsal.

THE farce, *A Peep behind the Curtain; or The New Rehearsal*, was first performed October 23, 1767, at the Drury-Lane playhouse. It served, the first evening, as the afterpiece to *The London Merchant, or George Barnwell;* before the month was out, it had been played after *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, and *Othello*. *The Public Advertiser* records twenty-one representations during the theatrical season of 1767-1768, one in the autumn of 1768, and nine during the year 1770. Genest records several representations at Drury-Lane in the season of 1778-1779; but since that time, the farce seems, in effect, to have been ignored.

In *A Peep behind the Curtain*, Garrick added one more to the already numerous satires cast in the mould of a theatrical rehearsal. He, who in 1761 had scored one of his most notable successes as an actor in the rôle of Bayes in Buckingham's *The Rehearsal*, was fully aware of the possibilities of this type; and his farce, though unequal to the Restoration play, furnishes a veritable link between that and the later 'rehearsal,' Sheridan's *The Critic*. All three pieces represent rehearsals on the stage of the Drury-Lane itself.

The text reprinted here is from the first edition, which appeared in November, 1767. *The Public Advertiser* for

October 23, 1767, announces for that day, at four o'clock, the publication of 'The Songs and Recitative of Orpheus, an English Burletta: Which is Introduced in a Farce of two Acts called, A New Rehearsal, or a Peep behind the Curtain.' The music for the burletta was composed by François Hippolyte Barthélemon, but was not printed in the pamphlet just described, and is now unobtainable. Two editions of the play were published in 1767; a third came out in 1768, and another in 1772. Still another edition, undated, describes it as 'Taken from the Manager's Book at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.'

At the Theatre Royal in *Drury-Lane*,

This present FRIDAY, the 23d of *October*, 1767,

Will be presented a TRAGEDY, call'd

The *London* MERCHANT;

Or, The History of GEORGE BARNWELL.

George Barnwell by Mr. REDDISH,

(Being his First Appearance in that Character.)

Thorowgood by Mr. HAVARD,

Trueman by Mr. PACKER,

Uncle by Mr. BURTON, *Blunt* by Mr. ACKMAN,

Maria by Mrs. PALMER,

Lucy (For the First Time) by Mrs. JEFFERIES,

Millwood by Mrs. HOPKINS.

In Act I. a Song by Miss YOUNG.

To which will be added a FARCE, of Two Acts, *Never Performed Before*, call'd

A PEEP Behind the Curtain;

Or, The NEW REHEARSAL.

The PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS by

Mr. KENG,

Mr. VERNON, Mr. DODD,

Mr. LOVE,	Mr. MOODY,	Mr. JOHNSTON,	Mr. KEAR,
Mr. PACKER,	Mr. J. PALMER,	Mr. PARSONS,	Mrs. BRADSHAW,
Mr. AICKIN,	Mr. BANISTER,	Mr. HARTRY,	Mrs. LOVE,

Mrs. ARNE, Miss POPE,

And Mrs. CLIVE.

With a PROLOGUE and an Address to the Town by Way of EPILOGUE.

Places for the Boxes to be had of Mr. JOHNSTON, at the Stage-Door.

To begin exactly at Six o'Clock. *Vivant Rex & Regina.*

To-morrow, KING *LEAR*.

King *Lear* Mr. BARRY, *Cordelia* Mrs. DANCER.

A PLAYBILL FROM DRURY-LANE.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN

Sir Toby Fuz.
Glib, the Author.
Wilson.
Mervin.
Sir Macaroni Virtu.
Patent, the Manager.
Hopkins, Prompter.
Saunders, Carpenter.
Johnston, Housekeeper.

WOMEN

Lady Fuz.
Miss Fuz.
First Sweeper.
Second Sweeper.

Dramatis Personæ to Orpheus.

Orpheus.
Old Shepherd.
Chorus of Shepherds.
Rhodope.

PROLOGUE.

BOLD is the man, and *compos mentis*, scarce—
Who, in these nicer times, dares write a Farce;
A vulgar long-forgotten taste renew;
All now are Comedies, five acts, or two.
Authors have ever in a canting strain,
Begg'd mercy for the bantling of their brain:
That you, kind nurse, wou'd fondle 't on your lap,
And rear it with applause, that best of pap—
Thus babes have in their cradles 'scap'd a blow,
Tho' lame and rickety from top to toe:
Our bard, with prologue-outworks has not fenc'd him,
For all that I shall say, will make against him.
Imprimis, this his piece—a Farce we call it—
Ergo, 'tis low—and ten to one you maul it!
Wou'd you, because 'tis low, no quarter give?
Black-guards, as well as Gentlemen, should live.
'Tis downright English too—nothing from France;
Except some beasts, which treat you with a dance.
With a Burletta too we shall present you—
And, not Italian—that will discontent you.
Nay, what is worse—you'll see it, and must know it—
I, Thomas King, of King-street, am the poet:
The murder's out—the murderer detected;
May in one night, be tried, condemn'd, dissected.
'Tis said, for Scandal's tongue will never cease;
That mischief's meant against our little piece:
Let me look round, I'll tell you how the case is—
There's not one frown a single brow disgraces;
I never saw a sweeter set of faces!

Suppose Old Nick, before you righteous folk,
Produce a farce, brimful of mirth and joke;
Tho' he, at other times, wou'd fire your blood;
You'd clap his piece, and swear, 'twas devilish good!
Malice prepense! 'tis false!—it cannot be—
Light is my heart, from apprehensions free—
If you wou'd save Old Nick, you'll never damn poor me.

A PEEP
BEHIND THE CURTAIN;
OR,
The New Rehearsal.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Covent Garden.

Enter Wilson *and* Mervin, *booted.*

Wils. My dear Jack—ten thousand thanks for your punctuality—ready equipped, I see, to serve your friend.

Merv. But how can I serve you, my young Don Quixote? Am I to be your Sancho while your Knight Errantship is running away with this Dulcinea del Toboso?

Wils. I have given orders that my post-chaise shall wait in the broad way by Exeter-Change, and the moment the lady steps from her chair to the chaise, the postilions will crack their whips, and drive away like lightning.

Merv. You are a romantic fellow!—How can you possibly imagine, that your hot-headed scheme to run away with this young lady can ever be executed?

Wils. From the justice of my cause, Jack.

Merv. Justice!—Make that out, and my conscience will be easy.

Wils. Did not her father's uncle, who was a good lawyer and cheated my father of three-fourths of his fortune, leave her near thirty thousand pounds?—Now, this is my reasoning—Sir Toby's uncle ran away with some thousands from my father, I shall run away with Sir Toby's daughter; this will bring the said thousands back to me again, with which I'll pay off old scores, strike a balance in my favour, and get a good wife into the bargain.—There's justice for you!

Merv. Ay, justice with a vengeance! But why must Sir Toby be punished for the sins of his uncle?

Wils. I'll ease your conscience there too.—My mother, at my father's death, took me a boy to Sir Toby and my Lady, to solicit their kindness for me.—He gave me half a crown to buy ginger-bread, and her Ladyship, who was combing a fat lap-dog, muttered—*There was no end of maintaining poor relations.*

Merv. I have not a qualm left.—But did you really pass for a strolling player last summer, to have a pretence of being near her father's house?

Wils. Yes, I did, and as Polonius says, *was accounted a good Actor.*

Merv. What could put that unaccountable frolic in your head?

Wils. To gain the favour of Sir Toby's family, as a strolling player, which I could not as a poor relation—they are fond of acting to madness, and my plan succeeded; I was so altered they did not know me—they liked me much, came to a Benefit, which I pretended

to have, invited me to their house, and Miss met me privately, after I had played Ranger and Lothario.

Merv. Ay, ay, when a young lady's head is crammed with combustible scraps of plays—she is always ready-primed, and will *go off* (if you will allow me a pun) the very first opportunity.

Wils. I discovered myself to the young lady, and her generosity was so great, that she resolved to marry me to make me amends—there are refined feelings for you!

Merv. Ay, double refined!—she is more romantic than you, Will.—But did not you run a great risk of losing her, when she knew you was only a gentleman, and not a player?

Wils. Read that letter, and tell me if my castles are built in the air? [*Gives a letter.*

Merv. [*Reads.*] *I shall be with my Papa and Mama to see a Rehearsal at Drury-Lane Playhouse on Tuesday morning; if my present inclinations hold, and my heart does not fail me, I may convince honest Ranger, what confidence I have in his honour.*—Postscript.—*If I don't see you then, I don't know when I shall see you, for we return into the country next week.*—

Wils. Well, what think you?

Merv. O she'll run away with you most certainly—

Wils. I must not lose time then. [*Looking at his watch.*] I must go and take my stand, that the *Deer* may not escape me.

Merv. And I'll go and take mine, to help you to carry off the ven'son.—This is very like poaching, Will.—But how will you get admittance into Drury-Lane Theatre?

Wils. I was very near being disappointed there, for unluckily the acting Manager, who scarce reached to my

third button, cocked up his head in my face, and said I was much too tall for a hero—however I got the liberty of the scenes by desiring to rehearse Hamlet next week. —But I hope to cross the Tweed with the fair Ophelia before that time, and finish my stage adventures by appearing the first time in the character of a good husband.

Merv. Success attend you.

Wils. —This is the day,
Makes me, or mars, for ever and for aye!—

If I succeed, I shall be restored to my father's estate, drink claret, and live like a gentleman with the wife of my heart—and, egad, for aught I know, stand for the County.

Merv. If not—you must be confined to your little one hundred and twenty pounds a year farm, make your own cheese, marry the Curate's daughter, have a dozen children, and brew the best October in the Parish.

Wils. Whichever way fortune will dispose of me, I shall be always happy to see my friends, and never shall forget my obligations to thee, my dear Jack.

[*Shakes him by the hand.*

Merv. Well, well—let us away—we have too much business to mind compliments. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II.

The Playhouse.

Two Women *Sweeping the Stage.*

First Wom. Come, Betty, dust away, dust away, girl, the Managers will be here presently; there's no lying in bed for them now, we are up early and late; all hurry

and bustle from morning to night; I wonder what the deuce they have got in their heads?

Sec. Wom. Why to get money, Mrs. Besom, to be sure; the folks say about us, that the other house will make them stir their stumps, and they'll make us stir ours: if they are in motion, we must not stand still, Mrs. Besom.

First Wom. Ay, ay, girl, they have met with their match, and we shall all suffer for it—for my part I can't go through the work, if they are always in this plaguy hurry; I have not drank a comfortable dish of tea since the house opened.

Sec. Wom. One had better die, than be scolded and hurried about as we are by the housekeeper; he takes us all for a parcel of Negers I believe: pray give us a pinch of your snuff, Mrs. Besom.

[*They lean upon their brooms and take snuff.*

First Wom. Between you and I, Betty, and our two brooms, the housekeeper is grown a little purse-proud; he thinks himself a great Actor forsooth, since he played the Scotch fellow, and the fat cook in Queen Mab.

Sec. Wom. The Quality spoils him too: why, woman, he talks to them for all the world as if he was a Lord.

First Wom. I shall certainly *resign*, as the great folks call it in the News Paper, if they won't promise to give me the first Dresser's place that falls, and make our little Tommy a Page; what, woman, though we are well paid for our work, we ought to make sure of something when our brooms are taken from us,—'tis the fashion, Betty.

Sec. Wom. Right, right, Mrs. Besom, service is no inheritance, and to be always doing dirty work, and to

have no prospect to rest, and clean ourselves, is the curse only of us poor folks.

First Wom. You and I will drink a dish of tea together in comfort this afternoon, and talk over these and other matters—but mum—here's the Prompter.

[*They sing and sweep again.*

Enter Hopkins, *the* Prompter.

Prompt. Come, come, away with your brooms, and clear the Stage; the Managers will be here directly. [*The sweepers hurry off.*] Where are the Carpenters?—Carpenters!

A Carpenter. [*Above.*] What do you want, Mr. Hopkins?

Prompt. What do I want? Come down and set the Scenes for the new Burletta of Orpheus.

Carp. We an't ready for it; the Beasts are now in hand—they an't finished.

Prompt. Not finished the Beasts! here's fine work! the Managers and Author will be here directly, and nothing ready;—fie, fie, fie.—Saunders!—Saunders!—

[*Calls out.*

Enter Saunders.

Saund. Here! here!—Zooks what a bawling you make, do keep your breath for your prompting, Master Hopkins, and not send it after me at this rate—I'm not deaf.

Prompt. But your men are, and asleep too I believe; I can't get a soul of 'em near me; 'tis ten o'clock, [*Looking at his watch.*] and not a Scene prepared for the Rehearsal; 'tis I shall be blamed, and not you.

Saund. Blamed for what? 'Tis but a rehearsal, and

of one Act only—would you have us to finish our work, before the Poet has done his? Don't you know that Carpenters are always the last in a house; and yet you want us to get out of it, before the Author has covered in.

Prompt. You may be as witty as you please; but the Managers will do as they please, and they have promised the Author to rehearse the first Act of his Burletta of Orpheus this Morning, as he pleases, with all the proper Scenes, Dresses, Machinery, and Music; so what signifies all our prating?

Saund. Very little as you say—but damn all these new vagaries, that put us all upon our heads topsy-versy —my men have sat up all night, and I have finished every thing but the Dancing Cows.

Prompt. Bless my heart, man, the Author depends most upon his Cows.

Saund. His Cows!—How came they to be his; they are *my* Cows;—these Poets are pretty fellows, faith; they say I'll have a flying Devil, or a dancing Bear, or any such conundrum; why 'tis easily said, but who is to make 'em fly, and dance? ha, Mr. Prompter? Why poor Pill Garlick. The Audience applauds, the Author is conceited; but the Carpenter is never thought of.

Prompt. These are bold truths, Mr. Saunders.

Saund. Why then out with 'em, I say—great men spin the brains of the little ones, and take the credit of 'em.—Do you know how I was served in our dramatic romance of *Cymon?*

Prompt. You did your business well there, particularly in the last Scene.

Saund. And what was the consequence? One fine gentleman in the boxes said my master brought it from

Italy;—*No, damn it* (says another, taking snuff) *I saw the very same thing at Paris;* when you all know here behind the scenes, that the whole design came from this head; and the execution from these hands,—but nothing can be done by an Englishman now-a-days, and so your servant, Mr. Hopkins— [*Going.*

Prompt. Hark'ee Saunders,—the Managers have ordered me to discharge the man at the lightning; he was so drunk the last time he flashed, that he has singed all the clouds on that side the stage.

[*Pointing to the clouds.*

Saund. Yes, yes, I see it, and hark'ee—he has burnt a hole in the new cascade, and set fire to the shower of rain—but mum—

Prompt. The deuce—he must be discharged directly.

[*Exit* Saunders.

Patent. [*Without.*] Where's the Prompter?

Prompt. Here I am, Sir.

Enter Patent.

Pat. Make haste with your scenes, Saunders; so, clear the stage, Mr. Hopkins, and let us go to business. Is the extraordinary Author of this very extraordinary performance come yet?

Prompt. Not yet, Sir, but we shall be soon ready for him.—'Tis a very extraordinary thing, indeed, to rehearse only one act of a performance, and with dresses and decorations, as if it were really before an Audience.

Pat. It is a novelty, indeed, and a little expensive too, but we could not withstand the solicitations that were made to us; we shan't often repeat the same experiment.

Prompt. I hope not, Sir,—'tis a very troublesome one, and the Performers murmur greatly at it.

Pat. When do the performers not murmur, Mr. Hopkins?—Has any morning passed in your time without some grievance or another?

Prompt. I have half a dozen now in my pocket for you. [*Feeling in his pockets for papers.*

Pat. O pray let's have 'em, my old breakfast—

[*Prompter gives 'em.*

And the old story—actresses quarrelling about parts; there's not one of 'em but thinks herself young enough for any part; and not a young one but thinks herself capable of any part—but their betters quarrel about what they are not fit for. So our ladies have at least great precedents for their folly.

Prompt. The young fellow from Edinburgh won't accept of the second Lord; he desires to have the first.

Pat. I don't doubt it.—Well, well, if the Author can make him speak English, I have no objection.

Prompt. Mr. Rantly is indisposed, and can't play to-morrow.

Pat. Well, well, let his lungs rest a little, they want it, I'm sure.—What a campaign shall we make of it; all our subalterns will be general officers, and our generals will only fight when they please.

Glib. [*Without.*] O he's upon the Stage, is he?—I'll go to him—

Pat. Here comes the Author, do you prepare the people for the Rehearsal—desire them to be as careful, as if they were to perform before an Audience.

Prompt. I will, Sir.—Pray let us know when we must begin. [*Exit* Prompter.

Enter Glib, *the Author.*

Glib. Dear Mr. Patent, am not I too late? Do make

me happy at once—I have been upon the rack this half hour.—But the ladies, Mr. Patent—the ladies—

Pat. But where are the ladies, Sir?

Glib. They'll be here in the drinking of a cup of tea—I left 'em all at breakfast—Lady Fuz can't stir from home without some refreshment—Sir Macaroni Virtu was not come when I left them; he generally sits up all night, and if he gets up before two o'clock he only walks in his sleep all the rest of the day.—He is perhaps the most accomplished connoisseur in the three kingdoms; yet he is never properly awake till other people go to bed;—however, if he should come, our little performance, I believe, will rouse him—ha, ha, ha!—you understand me?—A pinch of cephalic only.

Pat. I have the honour of knowing him a little.—Will Sir Macaroni be here?

Glib. Why he promised, but he's too polite to be punctual.—You understand me?—ha, ha, ha!—However, I am pretty sure we shall see him;—I have a secret for you—not a soul must know it—he has composed two of the songs in my Burletta.—An admirable musician—but particular.—He has no great opinion of me, nor indeed of anybody else, a very tolerable one of himself—and so I believe he'll come.—You understand me? ha, ha, ha!

Pat. I do, Sir.—But pray, Mr. Glib, why did not you complete your Burletta—'tis very new with us to rehearse but one act only?

Glib. By a sample, Mr. Patent, you may know the piece: if you approve you shall never want novelty—I am a very spider at spinning my own brains, ha, ha, ha! always at it—spin, spin, spin—you understand me?

Pat. Extremely well.—In your second act, I suppose, you intend to bring Orpheus into hell—

Glib. O yes—I make him play the devil there—I send him for some better purpose than to fetch his wife, ha, ha, ha!—Don't mistake me—while he is upon earth, I make him a very good sort of a man.—He keeps a mistress, indeed, but his wife's dead, you know—and were she alive not much harm in that—for I make him a man of fashion.—Fashion, you know, is all in all.—You understand me?—Upon a qualm of conscience, he quits his mistress, and sets out for hell with a resolution to fetch his wife—

Pat. Is that, too, like a man of fashion, Mr. Glib?

Glib. No, that's the *moral* part of him.—He's a mixed character—but as he approaches and gets into the infernal regions, his principles melt away by degrees, as it were, by the heat of the climate—and finding that his wife, Eurydice, is kept by Pluto, he immediately makes up to Proserpine, and is kept by her, then they all four agree matters amicably.—Change partners, as one may say, make a genteel *partie quarrée*, and finish the whole with a song and a chorus—and a stinger it is.—The subject of the song is—the old proverb, *exchange is no robbery*, and the chorus runs thus:

We care not or know,
In matters of love,
What is doing *above*,
But this, this, is the fashion, *below*.

I believe that's true satire, Mr. Patent—strong and poignant.—You understand me?

Pat. O very well—'tis cayenne pepper indeed—a little will go a great way.

Glib. I make Orpheus see in my hell all sorts of people, of all degrees, and occupations—ay, and of both sexes—that's not very unnatural, I believe—there shall be very good company too, I assure you; *high life below stairs*, as I call it, ha, ha, ha! you take me—a double edge—no boys' play—rip and tear—the times require it—*fortè—fortissimè*—

Pat. Won't it be too *fortè?*—Take care, Mr. Glib, not to make it so much above proof that the boxes can't taste it.—Take care of empty boxes.

Glib. Empty boxes!—I'll engage that my Cerberus alone shall fill the boxes for a month.

Pat. Cerberus?

Glib. Be quiet a little.—You know, I suppose, that Cerberus is a dog, and has three heads?

Pat. I have heard as much.

Glib. Then you shall see some sport.—He shall be a comical dog too, I warrant you—ha, ha, ha!

Pat. What, is Cerberus a character in your performance?

Glib. Capital, capital—I have thrown all my fancy and invention into his mouth, or rather mouths—there are three of 'em, you know.

Pat. Most certainly, if there are three heads.

Glib. Poh, that's nothing to what I have *in petto* for you.—Observe me now—when Orpheus comes to the gates of hell, Cerberus stops him—but how, how?—now for it—guess—

Pat. Upon my soul, I can't guess.

Glib. I make his three heads sing a *trio.*

Mr. Garrick in the Character of Bayes.

There's a bold flight for you now!

Act. IV. Sc. 2.

Published by I. Wenman April 1 1777.

Mr. Garrick in the Character of Bayes.

(Success in this rôle doubtless prompted Garrick to write *The New Rehearsal.*)

Pat. A trio!

Glib. A trio! I knew I should hit you—a trio, treble, tenor and bass—and what shall they sing? nothing in the world but, *Bow, wow, wow!*—Orpheus begins—

O bark not, Cerberus, nor grin—
A stranger sure to pass within,
Your goodness will allow?
Bow, wow, wow—

Treble, tenor and bass.—Then Orpheus shall tickle his lyre, and treble, tenor and bass, shall fall asleep by degrees, and one after another, fainter and fainter—*Bow, wow, wow*—fast.—You understand me?

Pat. Very ingenious, and very new.—I hope the critics will understand it.

Glib. I will make every body understand it, or my name is not Derry-Down Glib—When I write, the whole town shall understand me.—You understand me?

Pat. Not very clearly, Sir—but it is no matter.—Here's your company.

Enter Sir Toby, *Lady* Fuz, *Sir* Macaroni Virtu, *and Miss* Fuz.

Glib. Ladies and Gentlemen, you do me honour; Mr. Patent—Sir Toby and Miss Fuz, and this Sir Macaroni Virtu— [*All bow and curtsy.*

Sir Toby, one of the managers. [*Introducing* Patent.

Sir Tob. I am one of the manager's most humble and obedient.

Glib. I take it as a most particular compliment, Sir Macaroni, that you would attend my trifle at so early an hour.

Sir. Mac. Why, faith, Glib, without a compliment, I had much rather be in bed than here, or anywhere else.

[*Yawns.*

Lady Fuz. I have a prodigious curiosity to see your playhouse by daylight, Mr. Manager; have not you, Sir Macaroni?

Sir Mac. O no, my Lady—I never have any curiosity to see it at all. [*Half asleep.*

Pat. I will prepare some tea and chocolate in the Green Room for the ladies, while the Prompter prepares matters for the Rehearsal.

Lady Fuz. I never breakfast but once a day, Mr. Manager; Sir Toby indeed never refuses any thing at any time; he's at it from morning till night.

Sir Tob. I love to be social my dear,—besides trifling with tea, chocolate, macaroons, biscuits, and such things, is never reckoned eating, you know.

Glib. You are indefatigably obliging, Mr. Patent.

[*Exit* Patent.

Miss Fuz. Bless me, papa, what a strange place this is!—I am sure I should not have known it again—I wonder where he is! I wish I could get a peep at him—and yet I am frighted out of my wits.

[*Aside and looking about.*

Sir Tob. Now the Manager is gone, one may venture to say, that the playhouse is no morning beauty; paint and candle light are as great friends to the theatres, as to the ladies; they hide many wrinkles—don't they, Mr. Glib? ha, ha, ha!

Glib. You have hit it, Sir Toby, and this is the old house too, ha, ha, ha!

[*Sir Toby shows his daughter the scenes.*

Lady Fuz. [*Looking about with a glass.*] My dear Sir Toby, you, you may be as sarcastical as you please; but I protest a playhouse is a prodigious odd sort of a thing, now there is nobody in it:—is it not, Sir Macaroni?

Sir Mac. O yes, and a prodigious odd sort of thing when 'tis full too—I abominate a playhouse; my ingenious countrymen have no taste now, for the high seasoned comedies; and I am sure that I have none for the pap and loplolly of our present writers.

Glib. Bravo, Sir Macaroni!—I would not give a pin for a play, no more than a partridge, that has not the fumet.

Sir Mac. Not amiss, faith! ha, ha, ha!

Lady Fuz. Don't let us lose time, Mr. Glib;—if they are not ready for the Rehearsal, suppose the Manager entertains us with thunder and lightning,—and let us see his traps, and his whims, and harlequin pantomimes.

Sir Tob. And a shower of rain, or an eclipse; and I must beg one peep at the Patagonians.

Miss Fuz. Pray, Mr. Glib, let us have some thunder and lightning.

Glib. Your commands shall be obeyed, Miss; I'll whip up to the clouds and be your Jupiter Tonans in a crack.

[*Exit* Glib.

Sir Mac. A playhouse in *England* is to me, as dull as a church, and fit only to sleep in.

Lady Fuz. Sir Toby thinks so too;—I'll tell you what happened the last time we were there.

Miss Fuz. Ay, do, my dear lady, tell what happened to Papa—'twas very droll.

Sir Tob. Fie, fie, Fanny,—my lady, you should not tell tales out of school.—'Twas an accident.

Lady Fuz. A very common one with you, my dear. We dined late; Sir Toby could not take his nap, and we came early to the House;—in ten minutes he fell fast asleep against the box door, his wig half off, his mouth wide open, and snoring like a rhinoceros.

Sir Mac. Well, but the catastrophe, Lady Fuz?

Lady Fuz. The Pit and Galleries fell a-laughing and clapping—I jogged and pulled him till my arms ached; and if the Box-keeper had not luckily opened the door, and Sir Toby fell headlong into the passage, I should have died with shame.

Sir Tob. You'll not die with tenderness, I believe, for I got a lump upon my head as big as an egg, and have not been free from the headache ever since.

Miss Fuz. I shall never forget what a flump my papa came down with, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Mac. The tenderness runs in the family, Sir Toby?

Lady Fuz. Pray don't you adore Shakespeare, Sir Mac?

Sir Mac. Shakespeare! [*Yawning.*

Lady Fuz. Sir Toby and I are absolute worshippers of him—we very often act some of his best tragedy scenes to divert ourselves.

Sir Mac. And it must be very diverting, I dare swear.

Sir Tob. What, more family secrets! for shame, Lady Fuz.

Lady Fuz. You need not be ashamed of your talents, my dear—I will venture to say you are the best Romeo that ever appeared.

Sir Tob. Pooh, pooh!

Sir Mac. I have not the least doubt of Sir Toby's genius.—But don't your Ladyship think he rather carries too much flesh for the lover?—Does your Ladyship incline to tragedy too?

Lady Fuz. I have my feelings, Sir—and if Sir Toby will favour you with two or three speeches, I will stand up for Juliet.

Sir Tob. I vow, Lady Fuz, you distress me beyond measure—I never have any voice till the evening.

Miss Fuz. Never mind being a little husky, Papa—do tear your wig, throw yourself upon the ground, and poison yourself.

Sir Mac. This is a glorious scene, faith. [*Aside.*] Sir Toby looks as if he were susceptible of the tender passions.

Lady Fuz. Too much so, indeed; he is too amiable not to be a little faithless—he has been a great libertine —have not you, Sir Toby? have you not wronged me?—Come, give me a pinch of your snuff—

[*Takes snuff out of his box.*

Sir Tob. Forget and forgive, my dear,—if my constitution erred, my affections never did—I have told you so a thousand times.

Sir Mac. A wonderful couple, upon my soul!—

[*Aside.*

Enter Glib.

Glib. Ladies, you can't possibly have any thunder and lightning this morning; one of the planks of the thunder-trunk started the other night, and had not Jupiter stepped aside to drink a pot of porter, he had been knocked o' the head with his own thunderbolt.

Lady Fuz. Well, let us go into the Green Room then, and see the actors and actresses.—Is Clive there?—I should be glad of all things to see that woman off the stage.

Glib. She never attends here, but when she is wanted.

Lady Fuz. Bless me! If I was an actress, I should never be a moment out of the playhouse.

Sir Mac. And if I had my will, I would never be a moment in it.

Lady Fuz. I wish I could have seen Clive! I think her a droll creature—nobody has half so good an opinion of her as I have. [*Exit* Lady Fuz.

Miss Fuz. For my part, I had rather have had a little thunder and lightning, than all the tea and chocolate in the world. [*Going.*] I wonder I don't see him. [*Aside.*] [*Exit* Miss Fuz.

Sir Mac. What a set of people am I with! what a place I am in, and what an entertainment am I to go through! But I can't go through it—so I'll e'en get into my chair again, and escape from these Hottentots—I wish with all my soul that Sir Toby, my Lady, and Miss, the Author and his Piece, the Managers, their playhouse and their Performers, were all at the bottom of the Thames, and that I were fast asleep in my bed again. [*Exit.*

Enter Wilson.

Wils. [*Peeping.*] I durst not discover myself, though I saw her dear eyes looking about for me.—If I could see her for a moment now, as the stage is clear, and nobody to overlook us, who knows but I might kindle up her spirit this moment to run away with me. Hah! What

noise is that?—There she is—Miss Fanny! Miss Fanny —here I am.—By heavens, she comes—

Enter Miss Fuz.

Miss Fuz. O dear, how I flutter! I can't stay long—my Papa and Mama were going to rehearse Romeo and Juliet, or I could not have stole out now.

Wils. Let you and I act those parts in earnest, Miss, and fly to Lawrence's Cell.—Love has given us the opportunity, and we shall forfeit his protection if we don't make the best use of it.

Miss Fuz. Indeed I can't go away with you now—I will find a better opportunity soon—perhaps to-morrow. —Let me return to the Green Room; if we are seen together, we shall be separated for ever.—

Wils. To prevent that, let me lead you a private way through the house to a post-chaise—we shall be out of reach before Sir Toby and my Lady have gone half through Romeo and Juliet.

Miss Fuz. Don't insist upon it now—I could not for the world—my fear has taken away all my inclinations.

Wils. I must run away with you now, Miss Fuz.—Indeed I must.

Miss Fuz. Have you really a post-chaise ready?

Wils. I have indeed!—A post-chaise and four.

Miss Fuz. A post-chaise and four!—bless me!

Wils. Four of the best bays in London, and my postilions are in blue jackets, with silver shoulder-knots.

Miss Fuz. With silver shoulder-knots!—nay, then there is no resisting—and yet—

Wils. Nay, quickly, quickly determine, my dear Miss Fuz.

Miss Fuz. I will determine then—I will sit by my Papa at the Rehearsal, and when he is asleep, which he will be in ten minutes, and my Mama will be deaf, dumb, and blind to every thing, but Mr. Glib's wit—I'll steal out of the box from them, and you shall run away with me as fast as you can wherever your four bays and silver shoulder-knots please to take me.

Wils. Upon my knees I thank you, and thus I take an earnest of my happiness. [*Kisses her hand.* Zounds! here's your Mama, Miss—don't be alarmed—*Lady! by yonder blessed Moon I vow!*

Miss Fuz. Oh! swear not by the Moon, th' inconstant Moon!

Lady Fuz. [*Approaching.*] Let us have no sun and moon and stars now.—What are you about, my dear?—Who is this young gentleman you are so free with?

Miss Fuz. This is the young gentleman Actor, Mama, whose Benefit we were at last summer, and while you were busy acting in the Green Room, I stole out to try how my voice would sound upon the stage, and finding him here, I begged him to teach me a little how to play Juliet.

Lady Fuz. O, very well, my dear—we are obliged to the young gentleman, to be sure;—your Papa will teach you, child, and play Romeo with you: you should not be too free with these Actors—[*Aside.*] I am much obliged to you, Sir, for the pains you have taken with my daughter—we are very sensible of your politeness, and you may bring us some tickets when your Benefit time comes.

Wils. I am greatly honoured by your Ladyship, and

will go through all the scenes of Romeo and Juliet with Miss whenever she pleases.

Lady Fuz. O no, young man—her papa is a very fine actor, and a great critic, and he will have no body teach her these things but himself.—Thank the gentleman, child.—[*She curtsies.*]—Why did not you stay to hear your papa and me? Go, go, my dear, and I'll follow you. [*Exit Miss.*] Upon my word, a likely young man—your servant, Sir—and very likely to turn a young woman's head; were it not for setting my daughter a bad example, I should like to go over some scenes of Juliet with him myself. [*Exit, looking at him.*

End of the First Act.

ACT II.

The Stage.

Enter Glib, *Sir* Toby, *Lady and Miss* Fuz, Patent, *&c.*

Glib. What, we have lost Sir Macaroni! no great matter, for he was half asleep all the time he was here —very little better than a *caput mortuum*—Now, Ladies, and Gentlemen, of the jury, take your places. —Hiss and clap, condemn or applaud me as your taste directs you, and Apollo and the Nine send me a good deliverance.

Lady Fuz. We'll go into the front boxes.—What is the matter with you, Fanny?—You had rather be at your inconstant moon than hear Mr. Glib's wit.

Miss Fuz. I never was happier in all my life, Mama. [*Sighs.*

What will become of me? [*Aside.*

Sir Tob. I shall be very critical, Mr. Author.

Lady Fuz. Pray are we to have a prologue, Mr. Glib? We positively must have a prologue.

Glib. Most certainly—*entre nous*—I have desired the Manager to write me one—which has so flattered him, that I shall be able to do anything with him—[*Aside to Lady* Fuz.] I know 'em all from the Patentees, down to the waiting fellows in green coats—

Sir Tob. You are very happy in your acquaintance, Sir.

Lady Fuz. I wish some of the stage folks would show me round to the boxes.—Who's there?

Enter Johnston.

Johns. I'll conduct your Ladyship round, if you please.

Lady Fuz. Thank you, Mr. Johnston.—Remember my box the first night—and don't forget Clive's benefit.

Johns. I won't, my Lady.

Lady Fuz. Come, now for it, Glib—I shall have both my ears open, and I hope Sir Toby will do as much by his eyes.—Come, Fanny, my dear, this way.

[*Exit Lady* Fuz, *etc.*

Miss Fuz. I'll go my own way for the first time; now my spirits are up again—I have slipt my leading strings, and if dear Mr. Wilson's bays and postilions keep pace with my fancy, my papa and mama must run a little faster than they do to overtake me. [*Exit Miss* Fuz.

Enter Prompter.

Glib. I hope, Mr. Hopkins, that nobody has got secretly into the house; I would have none but friends at the first Rehearsal. [*Looking round the house.*

Prompt. You see the house is quite clear, Sir.

Glib. I would not have the town have the least idea of my performance before hand—I would open a masked battery of entertainment upon the public.

Prompt. You'll surprise 'em, I believe, Sir!

Glib. Pray be so good as to ring down the curtain, that we may rehearse in form.—So, so, so—very well; and now [*Curtain drops.*] I'll say a word or two to the Gentlemen in the Orchestra—Gentlemen, [*To the orchestra.*] I shall take it as a particular favour, if you

would be careful of your *pianos* and *fortès;* they are the light and shade, and without 'em music is all noise; and singing nothing but bawling.—

Musician. [*From the Orchestra.*] I don't quite understand this movement.—Is it allegro, Sir?

Glib. Allegro, spiritoso!—Flash, flash, fire! my friends—you gentlemen *haut-boys,* take particular care of your little solos.—You *bassoons,* support 'em, *con gusto,* not too powerfully, mind a delicacy of feeling in your second movement.—Make yourselves ready, Gentlemen.—Shoulder your fiddles.—Cock your bows—and the moment I vanish, fire away, crash.—I leave my fame in your hands.—My Lady—Sir Toby, are you got round?—O very well; I see you.—Don't forget a cordial now and then for the poor Author.

[*Speaking to the Audience, and making a sign of clapping.*

[*During the Burletta,* Glib, *the Author, goes out and comes in several times upon the Stage, and speaks occasionally to the performers, as his fancy prompts him, in order to enliven the action, and give a proper comic spirit to the performance.*

OVERTURE

TO THE

BURLETTA OF ORPHEUS

The Curtain rises to soft Music after the Overture, and discovers Orpheus *asleep upon a Couch with his Lyre near him—after the Symphony—*

Recitative accompanied.

Orpheus [*Dreaming.*

I come—I go—I must—I will. [*Half awake.*
Bless me!—Where am I?—Here I'm still—
[*Quite awake.*
Though dead, she haunts me still, my wife!
In death my torment, as in life;
By day, by night, whene'er she catches
Poor me asleep—she thumps and scratches;
No more she cries with Harlot's revel,
But fetch me, Orpheus, from the Devil.

Air.

I

Though she scolded all day, and all night did the same,
Though she was too rampant, and I was too tame;
Though shriller her notes than the ear-piercing fife,
I must and I will go to hell for my wife.

II

As the sailor can't rest, if the winds are too still,
As the miller sleeps best by the clack of his mill,
So I was most happy in tumult and strife;
I must and I will go to hell for my wife. [*Going out.*

Enter Rhodope.

Rhodope. *Recit.*

Your wife, you Driv'ler!—is it so?
But I'll play hell before you go.

Orpheus. [*Aside.*] *Recit.*

With fear and shame my cheeks are scarlet;
I've prais'd my Wife, before my Harlot.

Rhodope. *Recit.*

Go, fetch your wife, thou simple man;
What, keep us both?—is that your plan?
And dar'st thou, Orpheus, think of two?
When one's too much by one for you.

Orpheus. *Recit.*

My mind is fix'd—in vain this strife;
To hell I go to fetch my wife.—
[*Going*, Rhodope *holds him.*

Air.

Rhodope. [*In tears.*

Is this your affection,
Your vows and protection,
To bring back your Wife to your house?
When she knows what I am,
As a wolf the poor lamb,
As a cat she will mumble the mouse.

Orpheus. *Air and Recit.*

Pray cease your pathetic,
And I'll be prophetic,
Two ladies at once in my house;
Two cats they will be,
And mumble poor me:
The poor married man is the mouse.

Rhodope. *Recit.*

Yet hear me, Orpheus, can you be,
So vulgar as to part with me,
And fetch your wife?—am I forsaken?
O give me back what you have taken!
In vain I rave, my fate deplore,
A ruin'd maid, is maid no more;
Your Love alone is reparation,
Give me but *that*, and *this* for Reputation.
[*Snaps her fingers.*

Air.

I

When Orpheus you
Were kind and true,
Of joy I had my fill,
Now Orpheus roves,
And faithless proves,
Alas! the bitter pill!

II

As from the bogs,
The wounded frogs,
Call'd out, I call to thee;
O naughty boy,
To you 'tis joy,
Alas! 'tis death to me.

Orpheus. *Recit.*

In vain are all your sobs, and sighs,
In vain the rhet'ric of your eyes;
To wind and rain my heart is rock;
The more you cry—the more I'm block.

Rhodope. *Recit.*

Since my best weapon, crying fails,
I'll try my tongue, and then my nails.

Air.

Mount if you will, and reach the sky,
Quick as light'ning would I fly,
And there would give you battle;
Like the thunder I would rattle.
Seek if you will the shades below,
Thither, thither will I go,
Your faithless heart appall!
My rage no bounds shall know—
Revenge my bosom stings,
And jealousy has wings,
To rise above 'em all!

[Orpheus *snatches up the lyre.*

Orpheus. *Recit.*

This is *my* weapon, don't advance,
I'll make you sleep, or make you dance.

Air.

One med'cine cures the gout,
Another cures a cold,
This can drive your passions out,
Nay even *cure* a Scold.
Have you gout or vapours,
I in sleep,
Your senses steep,
Or make your legs cut capers.

DUETTO [*Accompanied with the lyre.*

Rhod. I cannot have my swing,
Orph. Ting, ting, ting.
Rhod. My tongue has lost its twang,
Orph. Tang, tang, tang.
Rhod. My eyes begin to twinkle,
Orph. Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle.
Rhod. My hands dingle dangle,
Orph. Tangle, tangle, tangle.
Rhod. My spirits sink,
Orph. Tink, tink, tink.
Rhod. Alas my tongue,
Orph. Ting, tang, tong.
Rhod. Now 'tis all o'er,
I can no more,
But-go-to-sleep—and—sno-o-re.

[*Sinks by degrees upon a couch, and falls asleep.*

Orpheus. *Recit.*

'Tis done, I'm free,
And now for thee,
Eurydice!
Behold what's seldom seen in life,
I leave my mistress for my wife.

Who's there? [*Calls a servant, who peeps in.*
Come in—nay never peep;
The danger's o'er—she's fast asleep,
Do not too soon her fury rouse,
I go to hell—to fetch my spouse.

Air. [*Repeated.*

Though she scolded all day, and all night did the same,
Though she was too rampant, and I was too tame;
Though shriller her notes than the ear-piercing fife,
I must and I will go to hell for my wife. [*Exit singing.*

Scene changes to a mountainous Country, with Cows, Sheep, Goats, etc.

After a short Symphony,

Enter Orpheus, *playing upon his lyre.*

Air.

Thou dear companion of my life,
My friend, my mistress and my wife
Much dearer than all three;
Should they be faithless and deceive me,
Thy Grand Specific can relieve me,
All med'cines are in thee,
Thou *veritable Beaume de Vie!*

Recit.

Now wake my Lyre, to sprightlier strains,
Inspire with joy both beasts, and swains,
Give us no soporific potion,
But notes shall set the fields in motion.

Air.

Breathe no ditty,
Soft and pretty,
Charming female tongues to sleep;
Goats shall flaunt it,
Cows *courante* it,
Shepherds frisk it with their sheep!

Enter Old Shepherd *with others.*

Recit.

Stop, stop your noise, you fiddling fool,
We want not here a dancing school.

Orpheus. *Recit.*

Shepherd, be cool, forbear this vap'ring,
Or this [*His lyre.*] shall set you all a-cap'ring.

Old Shepherd. *Recit.*

Touch it again, and I shall straight,
Beat time with this [*His crook.*] upon your pate.

Orpheus. *Recit.*

I dare you all, your threats, your blows,
Come one and all we now are foes.

Old Shepherd. *Recit.*

Zounds! what's the matter with my toes?
[*Begins to dance.*

Old Shepherd. *Air.*

From top to toe,
Above, below,
The tingling runs about me;
I feel it here,
I feel it there,
Within me, and without me.

Orpheus. *Air.*

From top to toe,
Above, below,

The Charm shall run about you;
Now tingle here,
Now tingle there,
Within you, and without you.

Old Shepherd. *Air.*

O cut those strings,
Those tickling things
Of that same cursed Scraper.

Chorus of Shepherds.

We're dancing too,
And we like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Orpheus. *Air.*

They cut the strings,
Those foolish things,
They cannot hurt the Scraper!
They're dancing too,
And they like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Chorus of Shepherds.

We're dancing too,
And we like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Old Shepherd. *Air.*

As I'm alive,
I'm sixty-five,
And that's no age for dancing;
I'm past the game,
O fie, for shame,
Old men should not be prancing:

O cut the strings,
Those tickling things,
Of that same cursed Scraper.

Chorus of Shepherds.

We're dancing too,
And we like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Orpheus. *Air.*

They cut the strings,
Those foolish things,
They cannot hurt the Scraper;
They're dancing too,
And they like you,
Can only cut a caper.

Chorus.

We're dancing too,
And we like you,
Can only cut a caper.

[Orpheus *leads out the Shepherds in a grand chorus of singing and dancing, and the Beasts following them.*

Glib. Here's a scene, Lady Fuz!—If this won't do, what the devil will, tal, lal, lal, lal—[*Dancing.*] Thank you, Gentlemen, [*To the orchestra.*] admirably well done, indeed—I'll kiss you all round over as much punch as the double bass will hold.

Enter Patent.

Glib. There, Mr. Manager, is an end of an Act.—Every beast upon his hind-legs!—I did intend that

houses and trees (according to the old story) should have joined in the dance, but it would have crowded the stage too much.

Pat. Full enough as it is, Mr. Glib.

Lady Fuz [*Without.*]—Let me come,—let me come, I say!

Glib. D'ye hear, d'ye hear! her Ladyship's in raptures I find;—I knew I should touch her.

Enter Lady Fuz.

Lady Fuz. These are fine doings, fine doings, Mr. Glib.—

Glib. And a fine effect they will have, my lady; particularly the dancing off of the Beasts.—

Lady Fuz. Yes, yes, they have danced off, but they shall dance back again, take my word for it.

[*Walks about.*

Glib. My dear lady, and so they shall—don't be uneasy—they shall dance back again directly—here, Prompter—I intend to have the scene over again—I could see it forever.

Lady Fuz. Was this your plot, Mr. Glib? Or your contrivance, Mr. Manager?

Pat. Madam!

Glib. No, upon my soul, 'tis all my own contrivance, not a thought stole from Ancient, or Modern; all my own plot.

Lady Fuz. Call my servants—I'll have a post-chaise directly—I see your guilt by your vain endeavours to hide it—this is the most bare-faced impudence!

Glib. Impudence!—may I die if I know an indecent expression in the whole piece!

Pat. Your passion, madam, runs away with you—I don't understand you.

Lady Fuz. No Sir,—'tis one of your Stage-players has run away with my daughter;—and I'll be revenged on you all;—I'll shut up your house.

Pat. This must be inquired into. [*Exit* Patent.

Glib. What, did Miss Fuz run away without seeing *Orpheus?*

Lady Fuz. Don't say a word more, thou blockhead.

Glib. I am dumb—but no blockhead.

Enter Sir Toby, *in confusion.*

Sir Tob. What is all this;—what is it all about!

Lady Fuz. Why, it is all your fault, Sir Toby—had not you been asleep, she could never have been stolen from your side.

Sir Tob. How do you know she is stolen? Inquire first, my Lady, and be in a passion afterwards.

Lady Fuz. I know she's gone; I saw her with a young fellow—he was upon his knees, swearing by the moon—let us have a post-chaise, Sir Toby, directly, and follow 'em.

Sir Tob. Let us dine first, my dear, and I'll go wherever you please.

Lady Fuz. Dine, dine! Did you ever hear the like? you have no more feeling, Sir Toby, than your Periwig.—I shall go distracted—the greatest curse of a poor woman, is to have a flighty daughter, and a sleepy husband.— [*Exit Lady* Fuz.

Sir Tob. And the greatest curse of a poor man, to have everybody flighty in his family but himself. [*Exit.*

Enter Patent.

Pat. 'Tis true, Mr. Glib,—the young lady is gone off, but with nobody that belongs to us—'tis a dreadful affair!

Glib. So it is faith, to spoil my Rehearsal—I think it was very ungenteel of her to choose this morning for her pranks; though she might make free with her father and mother, she should have more manners than to treat me so;—I'll tell her as much when I see her.—The second act shall be ready for you next week.—I depend upon *you* for a prologue—your genius—

Pat. You are too polite, Mr. Glib—have you an epilogue?

Glib. I have a kind of address here, by the way of epilogue, to the town—I suppose it to be spoken by myself, as the Author—who have you can represent me?—no easy task, let me tell you,—he must be a little smart, *dégagé*, and not want assurance.

Pat. Smart, *dégagé*, and not want assurance—King is the very man.

Glib. Thank, thank you, dear Mr. Patent,—the very man—is he in the house! I would read it to him.

Pat. O no!—since the audience received him in Linco, he is practising music, whenever he is not wanted here.

Glib. I have heard as much; and that he continually sets his family's teeth on edge, with scraping upon the fiddle.—Conceit, conceit, Mr. Patent, is the ruin of 'em all.—I could wish, when he speaks this address, that he would be more easy in his carriage, and not have that damned jerk in his bow, that he generally treats us with.

Pat. I'll hint as much to him.

Glib. This is my conception of the matter:—Bow your body gently, turn your head semicircularly, on one side and the other; and smiling, thus agreeably begin:

All Fable is figure—I your bard will maintain it,
And lest you don't know it, 'tis fit I explain it:
The *Lyre* of our *Orpheus*, means your approbation;
Which frees the poor Poet from care and vexation:
Should want make his mistress too keen to dispute,
Your smiles fill his pockets—and Madam is mute:
Should his wife, that's himself, for they two are but one;
Be in hell, that's a debt, and the money all gone;
Your favour brings comfort, at once cures the evil,
For 'scaping Bum Bailiffs, is 'scaping the devil.
Nay, *Cerberus Critics* their fury will drop,
For such barking monsters, your smiles are a sop:
But how to explain what you most will require,
That *Cows*, *Sheep*, and *Calves*, should dance after the lyre,
Without your kind favour, how scanty each meal!
But with it comes dancing *Beef*, *Mutton*, and *Veal*.
For sing it, or say it, this truth we all see,
Your applause will be ever *the true Beaume de Vie*.

THE END.

BON TON;

OR,

High Life Above Stairs.

BON TON; or High Life Above Stairs was first produced, after *Measure for Measure*, on March 18, 1775, at Drury-Lane, for the benefit of John King, the actor. Its original three acts were reduced to two for the second representation on March 27 of the same year. In the revised form it was repeated on April 4 and April 8. The farce continued to be acted well into the nineteenth century, for it was given at Covent Garden on June 6, 1827.

The play was doubtless sketched earlier than 1775, since the advertisement to the first edition reads as follows: 'This little Drama, which had been thrown aside for many years, was brought out last season, with some alterations, for the benefit of Mr. King, as a token of regard. . . . The author is singularly apprehensive that the excellence of the performance on the stage, will greatly lessen its credit with the readers in the closet.' That the play, however, was unexpectedly popular 'in the closet' is evident from the fact that, after the first edition in 1775, new editions came out in both London and Dublin. The piece also appeared frequently in miscellaneous collections, in one of which—Powell's Minor Theatre, London, 1793—it is erroneously attributed to John Burgoyne. It was translated into the Italian by Signior G. Piazza, under the title, *I Costumi del Mondo: Farsa*, and appeared in the eighth volume of *Il Teatro Moderno, etc.*, Venezia, 1796. A French translation, *Les Deshors d'un Mariage, comedie en deux actes*,

par Garrick, traduite de l'anglais, was done by A. H. Chateauneuf, and was published in Paris in 1827.

The text reprinted here is that of the first edition, London, 1775.

A PARTICULAR DESIRE.

For the Benefit of Mrs. ABINGTON.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane,

On MONDAY next, March 27, 1775,

The HYPOCRITE.

Doctor Cantwell by Mr. MOODY,
Sir John Lambert by Mr. PACKER,
Darnley by Mr. REDDISH,
Seyward by Mr. CAUTHERLEY,
Col. Lambert by Mr. JEFFERSON,
Maw-worm by Mr. WESTON,
Lady Lambert by Mrs. GREVILLE,
Old Lady Lambert by Mrs. BRADSHAW,
Charlotte by Mrs. ABINGTON.

To which will be added a NEW COMEDY of Three Acts (perfo rm'd but Once) call'd

BON TON, or High Life above Stairs.

(With ALTERATIONS.)

The CHARACTERS by

Mr. KING,
Mr. DODD,
Mr. PARSONS, Mr. BADDELEY,
Mr. BRERETON, Mr. LAMASH,
Mr. WHEELER, Mr. BURTON,
Miss POPE,
Miss PLATT,
And Mrs. ABINGTON.

The Prologue to be spoken by Mr. KING.

*** Tickets deliver'd for The TENDER HUSBAND will be taken.

Tickets and Places to be had of Mr. JOHNSTON, at the Theatre.

A PLAYBILL FOR *Bon Ton*.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN

Lord Minikin.
Sir John Trotley.
Colonel Tivy.
Jessamy.
Davy.
Mignon.

WOMEN

Lady Minikin.
Miss Tittup.
Gymp.

PROLOGUE,

Written by GEORGE COLMAN.

Spoken by Mr. KING.

FASHION in ev'ry thing bears sov'reign sway,
And words and periwigs have both their day:
Each have their *purlieus* too, are modish each
In stated districts, wigs as well as speech.
The *Tyburn* scratch, thick club, and *Temple* tie.
The parson's feather-top, frizz'd broad and high!
The coachman's cauliflower, built tiers and tiers!
Differ not more from bags and brigadiers,
Than great St. George's, or St. James's styles,
From the broad dialect of Broad St. Giles.
What is *Bon Ton?*—Oh, damme, cries a buck—
Half drunk—ask me, my dear, and you're in luck!
Bon Ton's to swear, break windows, beat the watch,
Pick up a wench, drink healths, and roar a catch.
Keep it up, keep it up! damme, take your swing!
Bon Ton is Life, my boy; Bon Ton's the thing!
Ah! I loves life, and all the joys it yields—
Says Madam Fussock, warm from Spital-fields.
Bone Tone's the space 'twixt Saturday and Monday,
And riding in a one-horse chair o' Sunday!
'Tis drinking tea on summer afternoons
At Bagnigge-Wells, with China and gilt spoons!
'Tis laying by our stuffs, red cloaks, and pattens,
To dance *Cow-tillions*, all in silks and satins!

Vulgar! cries Miss. Observe in higher life
The feather'd spinster, and thrice-feather'd wife!
The *Club's Bon Ton. Bon Ton's* a constant trade
Of rout, *Festino*, Ball and Masquerade!
'Tis plays and puppet-shows; 'tis something new!
'Tis losing thousands ev'ry night at loo!
Nature it thwarts, and contradicts all reason;
'Tis stiff French stays, and fruit when out of season!
A rose, when half a guinea is the price;
A set of bays, scarce bigger than six mice;
To visit friends you never wish to see;
Marriage 'twixt those, who never can agree;
Old dowagers, dressed, painted, patch'd, and curl'd;
This is *Bon Ton*, and this we call *the world!*
*[True, says my Lord; and thou my only son,
Whate'er your faults, ne'er sin against *Bon Ton!*
Who toils for learning at a public school,
And digs for Greek and Latin is a fool.
French, French, my boy's the thing! *jasez!* prate, chatter!
Trim be the mode, whipt-syllabub the matter!
Walk like a Frenchman! for on English pegs
Moves native awkwardness with two left legs.
Of courtly friendship form a treacherous league;
Seduce men's daughters, with their wives intrigue;
In sightly semicircles round your nails;
Keep your teeth clean—and grin, if small talk fails—
But never *laugh*, whatever jest prevails!
Nothing but nonsense e'er gave laughter birth,

*The Lines between Crotchets are omitted at the Theatre.

That vulgar way the vulgar show their mirth.
Laughter's a rude convulsion, sense that justles,
Disturbs the cockles, and distorts the muscles.
Hearts may be black, but all should wear clean faces;
The Graces, boy! the Graces, Graces, Graces!]
Such is *Bon Ton!* and walk this city through
In building, scribbling, fighting, and virtù,
And various other shapes, 'twill rise to view.
To-night our *Bayes*, with bold, but careless tints,
Hits off a sketch or two, like Darly's prints.
Should connoisseurs allow his rough draughts strike 'em,
'Twill be *Bon Ton* to see 'em and to like 'em.

BON TON;

OR,

High Life Above Stairs.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Lady Minikin *and Miss* Tittup.

Lady Min. It is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my Lord; I had no love for him before I married him, and you know, matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride, that he should neglect me, and run after other women.

Miss Titt. Ha, ha, ha, how can you be so hypocritical, Lady Minikin, as to pretend to uneasiness at such trifles: but pray have you made any new discoveries of my Lord's gallantry?

Lady Min. New discoveries! why, I saw him myself yesterday morning in a hackney-coach, with a minx in a pink cardinal; you shall absolutely burn yours, Tittup, for I shall never bear to see one of that colour again.

Miss Titt. Sure she does not suspect me. [*Aside.*] And where was your Ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

Lady Min. Taking the air with Colonel Tivy in his *vis-à-vis*.

Miss Titt. But, my dear Lady Minikin, how can you

be so angry that my Lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power in the *vis-à-vis*?

Lady Min. What, with my Lord's friend, and my friend's lover! [*Takes her by the hand.*] O fie, Tittup!

Miss Titt. Pooh, pooh, Love and Friendship are very fine names to be sure, but they are mere visiting acquaintance; we know their names indeed, talk of 'em sometimes, and let 'em knock at our doors, but we never let 'em in, you know. [*Looking roguishly at her.*

Lady Min. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miss Titt. I am extremely indifferent in these affairs, thanks to my education.—We must marry, you know, because other people of fashion marry; but I should think very meanly of myself, if after I was married, I should feel the least concern at all about my husband.

Lady Min. I hate to praise myself, and yet I may with truth aver that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, so consummate a contempt for her Lord, as I have for my most honourable and puissant Earl of Minikin, Viscount Perriwinkle, and Baron Titmouse.—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Titt. But is it not strange, Lady Minikin, that merely his being your husband, should create such indifference; for certainly, in every other eye, his Lordship has great accomplishments.

Lady Min. Accomplishments! thy head is certainly turned; if you know any of 'em, pray let's have 'em; they are a novelty, and will amuse me.

Miss Titt. Imprimis, he is a man of quality.

Lady Min. Which, to be sure, includes all the cardinal virtues—poor girl!—go on!

Miss Titt. He is a very handsome man.

Lady Min. He has a very bad constitution.

Miss Titt. He has wit.

Lady Min. He is a Lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miss Titt. He has great good nature.

Lady Min. No wonder—he's a fool.

Miss Titt. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

Lady Min. Was a great one—but he games, and if fairly, he's undone; if not, he deserves to be hanged—and so, Exit my Lord Minikin.—And now, let your wise uncle, and my good cousin Sir John Trotley, Baronet, enter: Where is he, pray?

Miss Titt. In his own room, I suppose, reading pamphlets and newspapers, against the enormities of the times; if he stays here a week longer, notwithstanding my expectations from him, I shall certainly affront him.

Lady Min. I am a great favourite, but it is impossible much longer to act up to his very righteous ideas of things.—Isn't it pleasant to hear him abuse everybody and everything, and yet always finishing with a—*You'll excuse me, Cousin?*—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Titt. What do you think the Goth said to me yesterday? One of the knots of his tie hanging down his left shoulder, and his fringed cravat nicely twisted down his breast, and thrust through his gold button hole, which looked exactly like my little Barbet's head in his gold collar—"*Niece Tittup,*" cries he, drawing himself up, "*I protest against this manner of conducting yourself, both at home and abroad.*"—"What are your objections, Sir John?" answered I, a little pertly.—"*Various and manifold,*" replied he. "*I have no time to enumerate particulars now, but I will venture to prophesy, if you*

keep whirling round in the vortex of Pantheons, Operas, Festinos, Coteries, Masquerades, and all the Devilades in this town, your head will be giddy, down you will fall, lose the name of Lucretia, and be called nothing but Tittup ever after—You'll excuse me, Cousin!"—and so he left me.

Lady Min. O, the barbarian!

Enter Gymp.

Gymp. A card, your Ladyship, from Mrs. Pewitt.

Lady Min. Poor Pewitt!—If she can be but seen at public places, with a woman of quality, she's the happiest of plebeians. [*Reads the Card.*

"Mrs. Pewitt's respects to Lady Minikin, and Miss Tittup; hopes to have the pleasure of attending them, to Lady Filligree's ball this evening.—Lady Daisey sees masks."—We'll certainly attend her.—Gymp, put some message cards upon my toilet, I'll send an answer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he must make some visits for me today again, and send me a list of those he made yesterday: he must be sure to call at Lady Pettitoes, and if she should unluckily be at home, he must say that he came to inquire after her sprained ankle.

Miss Titt. Ay, ay, give our compliments to her sprained ankle.

Lady Min. That woman's so fat, she'll never get well of it, and I am resolved not to call at her door myself, till I am sure of not finding her at home.—I am horridly low spirited today; do send your Colonel to play at chess with me. Since he belonged to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like everything that loves my Titty. [*Kisses her.*

Miss Titt. I know you do, my dear Lady. [*Kisses her.*

Lady Min. That sneer I don't like; if she suspects, I shall hate her. [*Aside.*] Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dress for the masquerade, and if that won't raise my spirits, you must assist me to plague my Lord a little. [*Exit Lady* Minikin.

Miss Titt. Yes, and I'll plague my Lady a little, or I am much mistaken: my Lord shall know every tittle that has passed: what a poor, blind, half-witted, self-conceited creature, this dear friend and relation of mine is! And what a fine spirited gallant soldier my Colonel is! My Lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune; my Lord likes me, and I like my Lord; however, not so much as he imagines, or to play the fool so rashly as he may expect; she must be very silly indeed, who can't flutter about the flame, without burning her wings. What a great revolution in this family, in the space of fifteen months!—we went out of England, a very awkward, regular, good English family! but half a year in France, and a winter passed in the warmer climate of Italy, have ripened our minds to every refinement of care, dissipation, and pleasure.

Enter Colonel Tivy.

Col. Tiv. May I hope, Madam, that your humble servant had some share in your last reverie?

Miss Titt. How is it possible to have the least knowledge of Colonel Tivy and not make him the principal object of one's reflections.

Col. Tiv. That man must have very little feeling and taste, who is not proud of a place in the thoughts of the finest woman in Europe.

Miss Titt. O fie, Colonel! [*Curtsies and blushes.*

Col. Tiv. By my honour, Madam, I mean what I say.

Miss Titt. By your honour, Colonel! why will you pass off your counters to me? Don't I know that you fine Gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given at the gaming table; and which indeed ought to be the only honour you should make free with.

Col. Tiv. How can you, Miss, treat me so cruelly? Have I not absolutely forsworn dice, mistress, everything, since I dared to offer myself to you?

Miss Titt. Yes, Colonel, and when I dare to receive you, you may return to everything again, and not violate the laws of the present happy matrimonial establishment.

Col. Tiv. Give me but your consent, Madam, and your life to come—

Miss Titt. Do you get my consent, Colonel, and I'll take care of my life to come.

Col. Tiv. How shall I get your consent?

Miss Titt. By getting me in the humour.

Col. Tiv. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss Titt. O, there are several ways; I am very good-natured.

Col. Tiv. Are you in the humour now?

Miss Titt. Try me.

Col. Tiv. How shall I?

Miss Titt. How shall I!—you a soldier, and not know the art military?—how shall I?—I'll tell you how;—when you have a subtle, treacherous, politic enemy to deal with, never stand shilly-shally, and lose your time in treaties and parlies, but cock your hat, draw your sword;—march, beat drum—dub, dub, a-dub—present, fire, piff-pauff—'tis done! they fly, they yield —Victoria! Victoria!— [*Running off.*

Col. Tiv. Stay, stay, my dear, dear Angel!—

[*Bringing her back.*

Miss Titt. No, no, no, I have no time to be killed now; besides, Lady Minikin is in the vapours, and wants you at chess, and my Lord, is low spirited, and wants me at piquet; my uncle is in an ill humour and wants me to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. Tiv. And will you, Miss?

Miss Titt. Will I!—no, I never do as I am bid; but you ought—so go to my Lady.

Col. Tiv. Nay, but Miss.

Miss Titt. Nay, but Colonel, if you won't obey your commanding officer, you shall be broke, and then my maid won't accept of you; so march, Colonel!—look'ee, Sir, I will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose. [*Exit.*

Col. Tiv. What a mad devil it is!—now, if I had the least affection for the girl, I should be damnably vexed at this!—but she has a fine fortune, and I must have her if I can.—Tol, lol, lol,— [*Exit singing.*

Enter Sir John Trotley *and* Davy.

Sir John. Hold your tongue, Davy, you talk like a fool.

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I could live here for ever!

Sir John. More shame for you:—live here for ever!—what, among thieves and pick-pockets!—what a revolution since my time! The more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation; what a dreadful change has time brought about in twenty years! I should not have known

the place again, nor the people; all the signs that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down;—not a bob or tie-wig to be seen! All the degrees from the parade in St. James's Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—the mason laying bricks, the baker with his basket, the post-boy crying newspapers, and the doctor prescribing physic, have all their hair tied up; and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow;—Mr. Wisp will do it for me—your honour and I look like Philistines among 'em.

Sir John. And I shall break your head if it is tied up; I hate innovation;—all confusion and no distinction!—The streets now are as smooth as a turnpike-road! No rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches; those who ride in 'em are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to waken 'em, when they are to be set down—what luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour? 'feckins, I liked it hugely.

Sir John. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when there is everything to delight my eye, and cherish my heart.

Sir John. 'Tis all deceit and delusion.

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, and squeezing, such a power of fine sights, fine shops full of fine things, and then such fine illuminations all of a row! and such fine dainty ladies in the streets, so civil and so graceless.—They talk of country girls,—these here look more healthy and rosy by half.

Sir John. Sirrah, they are prostitutes, and are civil to delude and destroy you: they are painted Jezabels, and they who hearken to 'em, like Jezabel of old, will go to the dogs; if you dare to look at 'em, you will be tainted, and if you speak to 'em you are undone.

Davy. Bless us, bless us!—how does your honour know all this!—were they as bad in your time?

Sir John. Not by half, Davy.—In my time, there was a sort of decency in the worst of women;—but the harlots now watch like tigers for their prey; and drag you to their dens of infamy—see, Davy, how they have torn my neckcloth. [*Shows his neckcloth.*

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour, they would not have hurt you.

Sir John. Well, we'll get away as fast as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope, for I have not had half my belly full yet.

Sir John. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you grow profligate; you shan't go out again to-night, and to-morrow keep in my room, and stay till I can look over my things, and see they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour then won't keep your word with me? [*Sulkily.*

Sir John. Why, what did I promise you?

Davy. That I should take sixpen'oth of one of the theatres to-night, and a shilling place at the other to-morrow.

Sir John. Well, well, so I did: is it a moral piece, Davy?

Davy. O yes, and written by a clergyman; it is called the *Rival Cannanites, or the Tragedy of Braggadocia.*

Sir John. Be a good lad, and I won't be worse than

my word; there's money for you—[*Gives him some.*] but come straight home, for I shall want to go to bed.

Davy. To be sure, your honour—as I am to go so soon, I'll make a night of it. [*Aside, and exit.*

Sir John. This fellow would turn rake and maccaroni if he was to stay here a week longer—bless me, what dangers are in this town at every step! O, that I were once settled safe again at Trotley Place!—nothing but to save my country should bring me back again; my niece Lucretia, is so be-fashioned and be-devilled, that nothing, I fear, can save her; however, to ease my conscience, I must try: but what can be expected from the young women of these times, but sallow looks, wild schemes, saucy words, and loose morals!—They lie a-bed all day, sit up all night; if they are silent, they are gaming, and if they talk, 'tis either scandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twisted, rattle-snake tippets—*O Tempora, O Mores!* [*Exit.*

Scene II.

Lord Minikin *discovered in his powdering gown, with* Jessamy *and* Mignon.

Lord Min. Prithee, Mignon, don't plague me any more; dost think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but be tortured all day under thy infernal fingers! give me my clothes.

Mign. Ven you loss your monee, my Lor, you no goot humour, the devil may dress your *cheveux* for me! [*Exit.*

Lord Min. That fellow's an impudent rascal, but he's a genius, so I must bear with him. Our beef and

pudding enriches their blood so much, that the slaves, in a month, forget their misery and soup maigre—O, my head!—a chair, Jessamy!—I must absolutely change my wine-merchant: I can't taste his champagne, without disordering myself for a week!—heigh-ho!— [*Sighs.*

Enter Miss Tittup.

Miss Titt. What makes you sigh, my Lord?

Lord Min. Because you were so near me, child.

Miss Titt. Indeed! I should rather have thought my Lady had been with you—by your looks, my Lord. I am afraid Fortune jilted you last night.

Lord Min. No, faith; our champagne was not good yesterday, and I am vapoured like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like—like—

Miss Titt. Like something very fine to be sure; but pray keep your simile for the next time;—and hark'ee—a little prudence will not be amiss; Mr. Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse. [*Half aside.*

Jess. O, pray don't mind me, Madam.

Lord Min. Gadso, Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you.

Jess. I shall, my Lord;—Miss thinks that everybody is blind in the house but herself. [*Aside and exit.*

Miss Titt. Upon my word, my Lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town-talk.

Lord Min. And so I will, my dear; and therefore to prevent surprise, I'll lock the door. [*Locks it.*

Miss Titt. What do you mean, my Lord.

Lord Min. Prudence, child, prudence; I keep all my jewels under lock and key.

Miss Titt. You are not in possession yet, my Lord:

I can't stay two minutes: I only came to tell you that Lady Minikin saw us yesterday in the hackney-coach; she did not know me, I believe; she pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

Lord Min. No intentions, I hope, of being fond of me?

Miss Titt. No, no, make yourself easy; she hates you most unalterably.

Lord Min. You have given me spirits again.

Miss Titt. Her pride is alarmed that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

Lord Min. Her pride then has been alarmed ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss Titt. But, dear my Lord, let us be merry and wise; should she ever be convinced that we have a *tendre* for each other, she certainly would proclaim it, and then—

Lord Min. We should be envied, and she would be laughed at, my sweet cousin.

Miss Titt. Nay, I would have her mortified too—for though I love her Ladyship sincerely, I cannot say but I love a little mischief as sincerely: but then if my Uncle Trotley should know of our affairs, he is so old-fashioned, prudish, and out of the way, he would either strike me out of his will, or insist upon my quitting the house.

Lord Min. My good cousin is a queer mortal, that's certain; I wish we could get him handsomely into the country again—he has a fine fortune to leave behind him—

Miss Titt. But then he lives so regularly, and never

makes use of a physician, that he may live these twenty years.

Lord Min. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miss Titt. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him; I suppose reading his formal books when I was in the country with him, and going so constantly to church, with my elbows stuck to my hips, and my toes turned in, has given me these foolish prejudices.

Lord Min. Then you must affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

Sir John Trotley.

[*Knocking at the door.*

Sir John. My Lord, my Lord, are you busy?

[*My Lord unlocks the door softly.*

Miss Titt. Heav'ns! 'tis that detestable brute, my uncle!

Lord Min. That horrid dog, my cousin!

Miss Titt. What shall we do, my Lord? [*Softly.*

Sir John. [*At the door.*] Nay, my Lord, my Lord, I heard you; pray let me speak with you?

Lord Min. Ho, Sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon, I'll put up my papers and open the door.

Miss Titt. Stay, stay, my Lord, I would not meet him now for the world; if he sees me here alone with you, he'll rave like a madman; put me up the chimney,—anywhere.

Lord Min. [*Aloud.*] I'm coming, Sir John! here, here, get behind my great chair; he shan't see you, and you may hear all; I'll be short and pleasant with him.

[*Puts her behind the chair, and opens the door.*

Enter Sir John.

During this Scene, my Lord turns the chair as Sir John *moves to conceal* Tittup.

Sir John. You'll excuse me, my Lord, that I have broken in upon you? I heard you talking pretty loud; what, have you nobody with you? What were you about, cousin? [*Looking about.*

Lord Min. A particular affair, Sir John; I always lock myself up to study my speeches, and speak 'em aloud for the sake of the tone and action—

Sir John. Ay, ay, 'tis the best way; I am sorry I disturbed you;—you'll excuse me, cousin!

Lord Min. I am rather obliged to you, Sir John;—intense application to these things ruins my health; but one must do it for the sake of the nation.

Sir John. May be so, and I hope the nation will be the better for't—you'll excuse me!

Lord Min. Excuse you, Sir John, I love your frankness; but why won't you be franker still? We have always something for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir John. You must know, my Lord, that I love to know what I eat;—I hate to travel where I don't know my way; and since you have brought in foreign fashions and vagaries, everything and everybody are in masquerade; your men and manners too are as much frittered and fricasseed, as your beef and mutton; I love a plain dish, my Lord.

Miss Titt. [*Peeping.*] I wish I was out of the room, or he at the bottom of the Thames.

Sir John. But to the point;—I came, my Lord, to

open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; shall I do it freely?

Miss Titt. Now for it!

Lord Min. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, cousin, and deserves all the kindness you can show her.

[*Lord* Minikin *and* Tittup *make signs at each other.*

Sir John. She must deserve it, though, before she shall have it; and I would have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her shoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Miss Titt. O, frightful!

Lord Min. Don't you think a taper leg, and falling shoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, Sir John?

Sir John. And therefore ought to be concealed; 'tis their interest to conceal 'em; when you take from the men the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands;—and then taper legs, falling shoulders and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

Lord Min. Well said, Sir John; ha, ha!—your niece shall wear a horseman's-coat, and jack-boots to please you.

Sir John. You may sneer, my Lord, but for all that, I think my niece in a bad way: she must leave me and the country, forsooth, to travel and see good company and fashions; I have seen 'em too, and wish from my heart that she is not much the worse for her journey:—you'll excuse me!

Lord Min. But why in a passion, Sir John?—

[*My Lord nods and laughs at Miss* Tittup, *who peeps from behind.*

Don't you think that my Lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the right road?

Sir John. Zounds! my Lord, you are out of it yourself; this comes of your travelling; all the town knows how you and my Lady live together; and I must tell you —you'll excuse me!—that my niece suffers by the bargain; prudence, my Lord, is a very fine thing.

Lord Min. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a buttonhole, but I don't choose to wear one;—you'll excuse me!

Sir John. I wish that he who first changed long neckcloths, for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth that I would give him.

Lord Min. Prithee, Baronet, don't be so horridly out of the way; prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality; we got rid of our *mauvais honte*, at the time that we imported our neighbours' rouge, and their morals.

Sir John. Did you ever hear the like! I am not surprised, my Lord, that you think so lightly, and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband; your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

Lord Min. Will you have her, Sir John? She is very much at your service.

Sir John. Profligate!—What did you marry her for, my Lord?

Lord Min. Convenience!—Marriage is not now-a-days, an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they who marry for love, and such old-fashioned stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those that advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir John. I have done, my Lord; Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from Sir John Trotley, Baronet.

[*Whistles and walks about.*

Miss Titt. I am frightened out of my wits!

[*Lord* Minikin *sings and sits down.*

Sir John. Pray, my Lord, what husband is this you have got for her?

Lord Min. A friend of mine; a man of wit, and a fine gentleman.

Sir John. May be so, and yet make a damned husband for all that. You'll excuse me!—What estate has he, pray?

Lord Min. He's a Colonel; his elder brother, Sir Tan Tivy, will certainly break his neck, and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir John. Here's morals!—a happy man when his brother has broke his neck!—a happy man. Mercy on me!

Lord Min. Why he'll have six thousand a year, Sir John—

Sir John. I don't care what he'll have, nor I don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady and let her have a fine gentleman; I shan't hinder her; I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for 'em, not I; I can't live among you, nor eat with you, nor game with you; I hate cards and dice, I will neither rob nor be robbed; I am contented with what I have, and am very happy, my Lord, though my brother has not broke his neck;—you'll excuse me! [*Exit.*

Lord Min. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox, come out of your hole! Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Titt. Indeed, my Lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley Manor, that's positive!—but no matter, there's no danger of his breaking his neck; so I'll e'en make myself happy with what I have, and behave to him, for the future, as if he was a poor relation.

Lord Min. [*Kneeling, snatching her hand, and kissing it.*] I must kneel and adore you for your spirit; my sweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter Sir John.

Sir John. One thing I had forgot. [*Starts.*

Miss Titt. Ha! he's here again!

Sir John. Why, what the devil;—heigh-ho! my niece, Lucretia, and my virtuous Lord, studying speeches for the good of the nation.—Yes, yes, you have been making fine speeches, indeed, my Lord; and your arguments have prevailed, I see. I beg your pardon, I did not mean to interrupt your studies—you'll excuse me, my Lord!

Lord Min. [*Smiling, and mocking him.*] You'll excuse me, Sir John!

Sir John. O yes, my Lord, but I'm afraid the devil won't excuse you at the proper time.—Miss Lucretia, how do you, child! You are to be married soon—I wish the gentleman joy, Miss Lucretia; he is a happy man to be sure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely so.

Miss Titt. Upon my word, Uncle, you are always putting bad constructions upon things; my Lord has

been soliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment extorted a consent from me—he was thanking and wishing me joy—in his foolish manner.

[*Hesitating.*

Sir John. Is that all! but how came you here, child? —did you fly down the chimney, or in at the window? For I don't remember seeing you when I was here before.

Miss Titt. How can you talk so, Sir John?—You really confound me with your suspicions;—and then you ask so many questions, and I have so many things to do, that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haste, I shan't get my dress ready for the ball; so I must run.—You'll excuse me, Uncle! [*Exit running.*

Sir John. A fine hopeful young Lady that, my Lord.

Lord Min. She's well-bred and has wit.

Sir John. She has wit and breeding enough to laugh at her relations, and bestow favours on your Lordship; but I must tell you plainly, my Lord—you'll excuse me—that your marrying your Lady, my cousin, to use her ill, and sending for my niece, your cousin, to debauch her—

Lord Min. You're warm, Sir John, and don't know the world, and I never contend with ignorance and passion; live with me some time, and you'll be satisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family; in the meantime command my house;—I must attend immediately Lady Filligree's masquerade, and I am sorry you won't make one with us;—here, Jessamy, give me my domino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle want for any thing; you'll excuse me, Sir John, tol, lol, dérol,— [*Exit singing.*

Sir John. The world's at an end! here's fine work; here are precious doings! this Lord is a pillar of the state too; no wonder that the building is in danger with such rotten supporters;—heigh-ho!—and then my poor Lady Minikin, what a friend and husband she is blessed with!—Let me consider!—Should I tell the good woman of these pranks, I may only make more mischief, and mayhap, go near to kill her, for she's as tender as she's virtuous;—poor Lady! I'll e'en go and comfort her directly, endeavour to draw her from the wickedness of this town into the country, where she shall have reading, fowling, and fishing, to keep up her spirits, and when I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune, with which I intended to reward the virtues of Miss Lucretia Tittup, with a plague to her. [*Exit.*

SCENE III *Lady* Minikin's *Apartments.*

Lady Minikin *and Colonel* Tivy *discovered.*

Lady Min. Don't urge it, Colonel; I can't think of coming home from the masquerade this evening. Though I should pass for my niece, it would make an uproar among the servants; and perhaps from the mistake break off your match with Tittup.

Col. Tiv. My dear Lady Minikin, you know my marriage with your niece is only a secondary consideration; my first and principal object is you—you, Madam! —therefore, my dear Lady, give me your promise to leave the ball with me; you must, Lady Minikin; a bold young fellow and a soldier as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder when the town has capitulated.

Lady Min. But it has not capitulated, and perhaps

never will; however, Colonel, since you are so furious, I must come to terms, I think.—Keep your eyes upon me at the ball,—I think I may expect that,—and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your signal for pursuing; I shall get home as fast as I can, you may follow me as fast as you can; my Lord and Tittup will be otherwise employed; Gymp will let us in the back way—no, no, my heart misgives me!

Col. Tiv. Then I am miserable!

Lady Min. Nay, rather than you should be miserable, Colonel, I will indulge your martial spirit; meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet. [*Throws down her glove.*

Col. Tiv. [*Seizing it.*] Thus I accept your sweet challenge; and if I fail you, may I hereafter, both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward.

[*Kneels and kisses her hand.*

Enter Sir John, *opening the door.*

Sir John. May I presume, cousin.

Lady Min. Ha! [*Squalls.*]

Sir John. Mercy upon us, what are we at now?

[*Looks astonished.*

Lady Min. How can you be so rude, Sir John, to come into a lady's room, without first knocking at the door? You have frightened me out of my wits!

Sir John. I am sure you have frightened me out of mine!

Col. Tiv. Such rudeness deserves death!

Sir John. Death indeed! for I shall never recover myself again! All pigs of the same sty! all studying for the good of the nation!

Lady Min. We must soothe him, and not provoke him. [*Half aside to the Colonel.*

Col. Tiv. I would cut his throat if you'd permit me.

[*Aside to Lady* Minikin.

Sir John. The Devil has got his hoof into the house, and has corrupted the whole family; I'll get out of it as fast as I can, lest he should lay hold of me too.

[*Going.*

Lady Min. Sir John, I must insist upon your not going away in a mistake.

Sir John. No mistake, my Lady, I am thoroughly convinced—mercy on me!

Lady Min. I must beg you, Sir John, not to make any wrong constructions upon this accident; you must know, that the moment you were at the door—I had promised the Colonel no longer to be his enemy in his designs upon Miss Tittup—this threw him into such a rapture—that upon my promising my interest with you —and wishing him joy—he fell upon his knees, and—and—[*Laughing*] ha, ha, ha!

Col. Tiv. Ha, ha, ha! yes, yes, I fell upon my knees, and—and—

Sir John. Ay, ay, fell upon your knees and—and,—ha! ha! a very good joke, faith; and the best of it is, that they are wishing joy all over the house upon the same occasion: and my Lord is wishing joy, and I wish him joy and you with all my heart.

Lady Min. Upon my word, Sir John, your cruel suspicions affect me strongly; and though my resentment is curbed by my regard, my tears cannot be restrained; 'tis the only resource my innocence has left.

[*Exit crying.*

Col. Tiv. I reverence you, Sir, as a relation to that Lady, but as her slanderer I detest you: her tears must

be dried, and my honour satisfied; you know what I mean; take your choice;—time, place, sword or pistol; consider it calmly, and determine as you please; I am a soldier, Sir John. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Very fine, truly! and so between the crocodile and the bully, my throat is to be cut; they are guilty of all sorts of iniquity, and when they are discovered, no humility and repentance;—the ladies have resource to their tongues or their tears, and the gallants to their swords.—That I may not be drawn in by the one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry into the country while I retain my senses, and can sleep in a whole skin. [*Exit.*

End of the First Act.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Sir John *and* Jessamy.

Sir John. There is no bearing this! what a land are we in! Upon my word, Mr. Jessamy, you should look well to the house; there are certainly rogues about it: for I did but cross the way just now to the Pamphlet-shop, to buy a touch of the times, and they have taken my hanger from my side; ay, and had a pluck at my watch too, but I heard of their tricks, and had it sewed to my pocket.

Jess. Don't be alarmed, Sir John; 'tis a very common thing, and if you will walk the streets without convoy, you will be picked up by privateers of all kinds; ha, ha!

Sir John. Not be alarmed when I am robbed!—why, they might have cut my throat with my own hanger; I shan't sleep a wink all night; so pray lend me some weapon of defence, for I am sure if they attack me in the open street, they'll be with me at night again.

Jess. I'll lend you my own sword, Sir John; but be assured there's no danger; there's robbing and murder cried every night under my window; but it no more disturbs me, than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir John. Well, well, be that as it will, I must be upon my guard; what a dreadful place this is! But 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times; the great folks game, and the poor folks rob; no wonder that murder ensues; sad, sad, sad!—well, let me but get over this night, and I'll leave this den of thieves to-morrow;

how long will your Lord and Lady stay at this masking and mummery before they come home?

Jess. 'Tis impossible to say the time, Sir; that merely depends upon the spirits of the company and the nature of the entertainment: for my own part, I generally make it myself till four or five in the morning.

Sir John. Why, what the devil, do you make one at these masqueradings?

Jess. I seldom miss, Sir; I may venture to say that nobody knows the trim and small talk of the place better than I do; I was always reckoned an incomparable mask.

Sir John. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb, I am sure. [*Aside.*

Jess. An odd, ridiculous accident happened to me at a masquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top spirits, and had drank a little too freely of the champagne, I believe.

Sir John. You'll be hanged, I believe. [*Aside.*

Jess. Wit flew about. In short, I was in spirits; at last, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleasure, we went to dancing: and who do you think I danced a minuet with? he! he! Pray guess, Sir John?

Sir John. Danced a minuet with. [*Half aside.*

Jess. My own Lady, that's all; the eyes of the whole assembly were upon us; my Lady dances well, and, I believe, I am pretty tolerable: after the dance, I was running into a little coquetry, and small talk with her.

Sir John. With your Lady?—Chaos is come again! [*Aside.*

Jess. With my Lady—but upon my turning my hand thus—[*Conceitedly.*] egad, she caught me; whispered

me who I was; I would fain have laughed her out of it, but it would not do. "No, no Jessamy," says she, "I am not to be deceived: pray wear gloves for the future; for you may as well go bare-faced, as show that hand and diamond ring."

Sir John. What a sink of iniquity!—Prostitution on all sides! from the Lord to the pick-pocket. [*Aside.*] Pray, Mr. Jessamy, among your other virtues, I suppose you game a little, eh, Mr. Jessamy?

Jess. A little whist or so;—but I am tied up from the dice; I must never touch a box again.

Sir John. I wish you were tied up somewhere else; I sweat from top to toe! [*Aside.*] Pray lend me your sword, Mr. Jessamy; I shall go to my room; and let my Lord and Lady and my niece Tittup know that I beg they will excuse ceremonies, that I must be up and gone before they go to bed; and that I have a most profound respect and love for them, and—that I hope we shall never see one another again as long as we live.

Jess. I shall certainly obey your commands; what poor ignorant wretches, these country gentlemen are!

[*Aside and exit.*

Sir John. If I stayed in this place another day, it would throw me into a fever! Oh I wish it was morning —this comes of visiting my relations!

Enter Davy, *drunk.*

Sir John. So, you wicked wretch you—where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour,—London for ever!

Sir John. Did not I order you to come directly from the play, and not be idling and raking about?

Davy. Servants don't do what they are bid in London.

Sir John. And did not I order you not to make a jackanapes of yourself, and tie your hair up like a monkey?

Davy. And therefore I did it—no pleasing the ladies without this—my Lord's servants call you an old out-of-fashioned codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir John. Here's an imp of the devil! He is undone, and will poison the whole country.—Sirrah, get everything ready, I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, Sir!—I want to go to bed myself, Sir.

Sir John. Why how now—you are drunk too, Sirrah.

Davy. I am a little, your honour, because I have been drinking.

Sir John. That is not all—you have been in bad company, Sirrah!

Davy. Indeed, your honour's mistaken, I never kept such good company in all my life.

Sir John. The fellow does not understand me—where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking, to be sure, if I am a drunkard; and if you had been drinking too, as I have been, you would not be in such a passion with a body—it makes one so good-natured—

Sir John. This is another addition to my misfortunes! I shall have this fellow carry into the country as many vices as will corrupt the whole parish.

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your Worship.

Sir John. Get away, you beast you, and sleep off the debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or I shall leave you behind, as a proper person to make one of his Lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better—give me more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another.

[*Struts about.*

Sir John. Here's a reprobate!—this is the completion of my misery! But hark'ee villain—go to bed—and sleep off your iniquity, and then pack up the things, or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport you for life.

[*Exit.*

Davy. That for you, old codger. [*Snaps his fingers.*]—I know the law better than to be frightened with moonshine! I wish that I was to live here all my days!—this is life indeed! A servant lives up to his eyes in clover; they have wages, and board-wages, and nothing to do, but to grow fat and saucy—they are as happy as their master, they play for ever at cards, swear like emperors, drink like fishes, and go a-wenching with as much ease and tranquility, as if they were going to a sermon! Oh! 'tis a fine life! [*Exit reeling.*

Scene II.

A Chamber in Lord Minikin's *House.*

Enter Lord Minikin, *and Miss* Tittup, *in masquerade dresses, lighted by* Jessamy.

Lord Min. Set down the candles, Jessamy, and should your Lady come home let me know—be sure you are not out of the way.

Jess. I have lived too long with your Lordship, to need the caution. Who the Devil have we got now? But that's my Lord's business, and not mine. [*Exit.*

Miss Titt. [*Pulling off her mask.*] Upon my

word, my Lord, this coming home so soon from the masquerade is very imprudent, and will certainly be observed. I am most inconceivably frightened, I can assure you. My Uncle Trotley has a light in his room; the accident this morning will certainly keep him upon the watch. Pray, my Lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country. I find that my English heart, though it has ventured so far, grows fearful and awkward to practice the freedoms of warmer climates. [*My Lord takes her by the hand.*] If you will not desist, my Lord—we are separated forever—the sight of the precipice turns my head. I have been giddy with it too long, and must turn from it while I can—pray be quiet, my Lord, I will meet you to-morrow.

Lord Min. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my situation—let the weak, bashful, coyish whiner be intimidated with these faint alarms, but let the bold experienced lover kindle at the danger, and like the eagle in the midst of storms thus pounce upon his prey.

[*Takes hold of her.*

Miss Titt. Dear, Mr. Eagle, be merciful, pray let the poor pigeon fly for this once.

Lord Min. If I do, my Dove, may I be cursed to have my wife as fond of me, as I am now of thee.

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Jess. [*Without, knocking at the door.*] My Lord, my Lord!—

Miss Titt. [*Screams.*] Ha!

Lord Min. Who's there?

Jess. [*Peeping.*] 'Tis I, my Lord, may I come in?

Lord Min. Damn the fellow! What's the matter?

Jess. Nay, not much my Lord—only my Lady's come home.

Miss Titt. Then I'm undone—what shall I do?—I'll run into my own room.

Lord Min. Then she may meet you going to hers.

Jess. There's a dark, deep closet, my Lord. Miss may hide herself there.

Miss Titt. For heaven's sake put me into it, and when her Ladyship's safe, let me know, my Lord.—What an escape have I had!

Lord Min. The moment her evil spirit is laid, I'll let my angel out. [*Puts her into the closet.*] Lock the door on the inside.—Come softly to my room, Jessamy—

Jess. If a board creaks, your Lordship shall never give me a laced waistcoat again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Gymp *lighting in Lady* Minikin *and Colonel* Tivy, *in masquerade dresses.*

Gymp. Pray, my Lady, go no farther with the Colonel; I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I'm sure there will be bloodshed, for my Lord is certainly in the house—I'll take my affadavy that I heard—

Col. Tiv. It can't be, I tell you; we left him this moment at the masquerade—I spoke to him before I came out.

Lady Min. He's too busy and too well employed to think of home—but don't tremble so, Gymp. There is no harm I assure you—the Colonel is to marry my niece, and it is proper to settle some matters relating to it—they are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, madam, to be sure it is proper that you talk together,—I know you mean nothing but innocence,—but indeed there will be bloodshed.

Col. Tiv. The girl's a fool. I have no sword by my side.

Gymp. But my Lord has, and you may kill one another with that—I know you mean nothing but innocence, but I certainly heard him go up the backstairs into his room talking with Jessamy.

Lady Min. 'Tis impossible but the girl must have fancied this.—Can't you ask Whisp, or Mignon, if their master is come in?

Gymp. Lord, my Lady, they are always drunk before this, and asleep in the kitchen.

Lady Min. This frightened fool has made me as ridiculous as herself; hark!—Colonel, I'll swear there is something upon the stairs; now I am in the field I find I am a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodshed.

Col. Tiv. I'll slip down with Gymp this back way then. [*Going.*

Gymp. O dear, my Lady, there is somebody coming up them too.

Col. Tiv. Zounds! I've got between two fires!

Lady Min. Run into the closet.

Col. Tiv. [*Runs to the closet.*] There's no retreat—the door is locked!

Lady Min. Behind the chimney-board, Gymp.

Col. Tiv. I shall certainly be taken prisoner.

[*Goes behind the board.*]

You'll let me know when the enemy's decamped.

Lady Min. Leave that to me.—Do you, Gymp, go

down the backstairs, and leave me to face my Lord. I think I can match him at hypocrisy. [*Sits down.*

Enter Lord Minikin.

Lord Min. What, is your Ladyship so soon returned from Lady Fillagree's?

Lady Min. I am sure, my Lord, I ought to be more surprised at your being here so soon when I saw you so well entertained in a *tête-à-tête* with a lady in crimson. Such sights, my Lord, will always drive me from my most favourite amusements.

Lord Min. You find at least, that the Lady, whoever she was, could not engage me to stay, when I found your Ladyship had left the ball.

Lady Min. Your Lordship's sneering upon my unhappy temper, may be a proof of your wit, but is none of your humanity, and this behaviour is as great an insult upon me, as even your falsehood itself.

[*Pretends to weep.*

Lord Min. Nay, my dear Lady Minikin; if you are resolved to play tragedy, I shall roar away too, and pull out my cambric handkerchief.

Lady Min. I think, my Lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakness, and your brutality will only expose us to our servants—where is Tittup, pray?—

Lord Min. I left her with the Colonel—a masquerade to young folks, upon the point of matrimony, is as delightful as it is disgusting to those who are happily married, and are wise enough to love home, and the company of their wives. [*Takes hold of her hand.*

Lady Min. False man!—I had as lief a toad touched me. [*Aside.*

Lord Min. She gives me the *frison*—I must propose to stay, or I shall never get rid of her. [*Aside.*] I am quite aguish to-night,—he—he—do, my dear, let us make a little fire here, and have a family *tête-à-tête*, by way of novelty. [*Rings a bell.*

Enter Jessamy.

Lord Min. Let 'em take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

Lady Min. What shall I do? [*Aside.*]—Here, Jessamy, there is no occasion—I am going to my own chamber, and my Lord won't stay here by himself.

[*Exit* Jessamy.

Lord Min. How cruel it is, Lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleasure of a domestic duetto—a good escape, faith! [*Aside.*

Lady Min. I have too much regard for Lord Minikin to agree to anything that would afford him so little pleasure. I shall retire to my own apartments.

Lord Min. Well, if your Ladyship will be cruel, I must still, like the miser, starve and sigh, though possessed of the greatest treasure—[*Bows.*] I wish your Ladyship a good night—[*He takes one candle, and Lady* Minikin *the other.*] May I presume—

[*Salutes her.*

Lady Min. Your Lordship is too obliging—nasty man! [*Aside.*

Lord Min. Disagreeable woman! [*Aside.*

[*They wipe their lips, and exeunt ceremoniously.*]

Miss Titt. [*Peeping out of the closet.*] All's silent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here I cannot guess. I long to be relieved. I wish my Lord was come—but I hear a noise! [*She shuts the door.*

Col. Tiv. [*Peeping over the chimney-board.*] I wonder my Lady does not come—I would not have Miss Tittup know of this—'twould be ten thousand pounds out of my way, and I can't afford to give so much for a little gallantry.

Miss Titt. [*Comes forward.*] What would my Colonel say to find his bride, that is to be, in this critical situation.

Enter Lord Minikin, *at one door in the dark.*

Lord Min. Now to relieve my prisoner.

[*Comes forward.*

Enter Lady Minikin, *at the other door.*

Lady Min. My poor Colonel will be as miserable, as if he were besieged in garrison; I must release him.

[*Going towards the chimney.*

Lord Min. Hist—hist!—

Miss Titt., Lady Min., and Col. Tiv. Here! here!—

Lord Min. This way.

Lady Min. Softly.

[*They all grope about till Lord* Minikin *has got Lady* Minikin, *and the Colonel, Miss* Tittup.]

Sir John. [*Speaks without.*] Light this way, I say; I am sure there are thieves; get a blunderbuss.

Jess. Indeed you dreamed it; there is nobody but the family. [*All stand and stare.*

Enter Sir John, *in his cap, and with hanger drawn, with* Jessamy.

Sir John. Give me the candle; I'll ferret 'em out I warrant; bring a blunderbuss, I say; they have been skipping about that gallery in the dark this half hour; there must be mischief.—I have watched 'em into this

room—ho, ho, are you there? If you stir, you are dead men—[*They retire.*]—and [*Seeing the ladies.*] women too!—egad—ha! What's this? The same party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatched in this righteous town.—You'll excuse me, cousins! [*They all look confounded.*

Lord Min. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about?

Sir John. Well, but hark'ee my dear cousins, have you not got wrong partners? Here has been some mistake in the dark; I am mighty glad that I have brought you a candle, to set all to rights again—you'll excuse me, gentlemen and ladies!

Enter Gymp, *with a candle.*

Gymp. What, in the name of mercy, is the matter?

Sir John. Why the old matter, and the old game, Mrs. Gymp, and I'll match my cousins here at it, against all the world, and I say done first.

Lord Min. What is the meaning, Sir John, of all this tumult and consternation? May not Lady Minikin and I, and the Colonel and your niece, be seen in my house together without your raising the family, and making this uproar and confusion?

Sir John. Come, come, good folks, I see you are all confounded. I'll settle this matter in a moment.—As for you, Colonel—though you have not deserved plain dealing from me, I will now be serious. You imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me.—'Tis a mistake; she has no expectations from me. If she marry you, and I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. Tiv. Plain dealing is a jewel, and to show you, Sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely obliged to you for your intelligence, and I am, ladies, your most obedient humble servant. I shall see you, my Lord, at the club to-morrow? [*Exit Col.* Tivy.

Lord Min. Sans doute, mon cher Colonel—I'll meet you there without fail.

Sir John. My Lord, you'll have something else to do.

Lord Min. Indeed! what is that, good Sir John?

Sir John. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told, what you have always turned a deaf ear to, that the dissipation of your fortune and morals, must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance—as you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

Lord Min. The bumpkin is no fool, and is damned satirical. [*Aside.*

Sir John. This kind of quarantine for pestilential minds, will bring you to your senses, and make you renounce foreign vices and follies, and return with joy to your country and property again—read that, my Lord, and know your fate. [*Gives a paper.*

Lord Min. What an abomination this is! that a man of fashion, and a nobleman, shall be obliged to submit to the laws of his country.

Sir John. Thank heaven, my Lord, we are in that country!—You are silent, ladies. If repentance has subdued your tongues, I shall have hopes of you—a little country air might perhaps do well—as you are distressed, I am at your service—what say you, my Lady?

Lady Min. However appearances have condemned me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate —your kindness and example may restore me to my former natural English constitution.

Sir John. Will you resign your Lady to me, my Lord, for a time?

Lord Min. For ever, dear Sir John, without a murmur.

Sir John. Well, Miss, and what say you?

Miss Titt. Guilty, uncle. [*Curtsying.*

Sir John. Guilty! the devil you are! Of what?

Miss Titt. Of consenting to marry one, whom my heart could not approve, and coquetting with another, which friendship, duty, honour, morals, and everything but fashion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir John. Thus then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the mistress of another, under this, I sally forth a Knight Errant, to rescue distressed damsels from those monsters, foreign vices and *Bon Ton*, as they call it; and I trust that every English hand and heart here, will assist me in so desperate an undertaking.—*You'll excuse me, Sirs?*

THE END.

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